

TRANSITION FROM PRIMARY TO SECONDARY IN THE GAMBIA:  
THE IMPACT OF THE COMMON ENTRANCE EXAMINATION ON  
TEACHING, LEARNING AND THE CURRICULUM IN THE  
UPPER PRIMARY SCHOOL

YAHYA EBRIMA BOJANG

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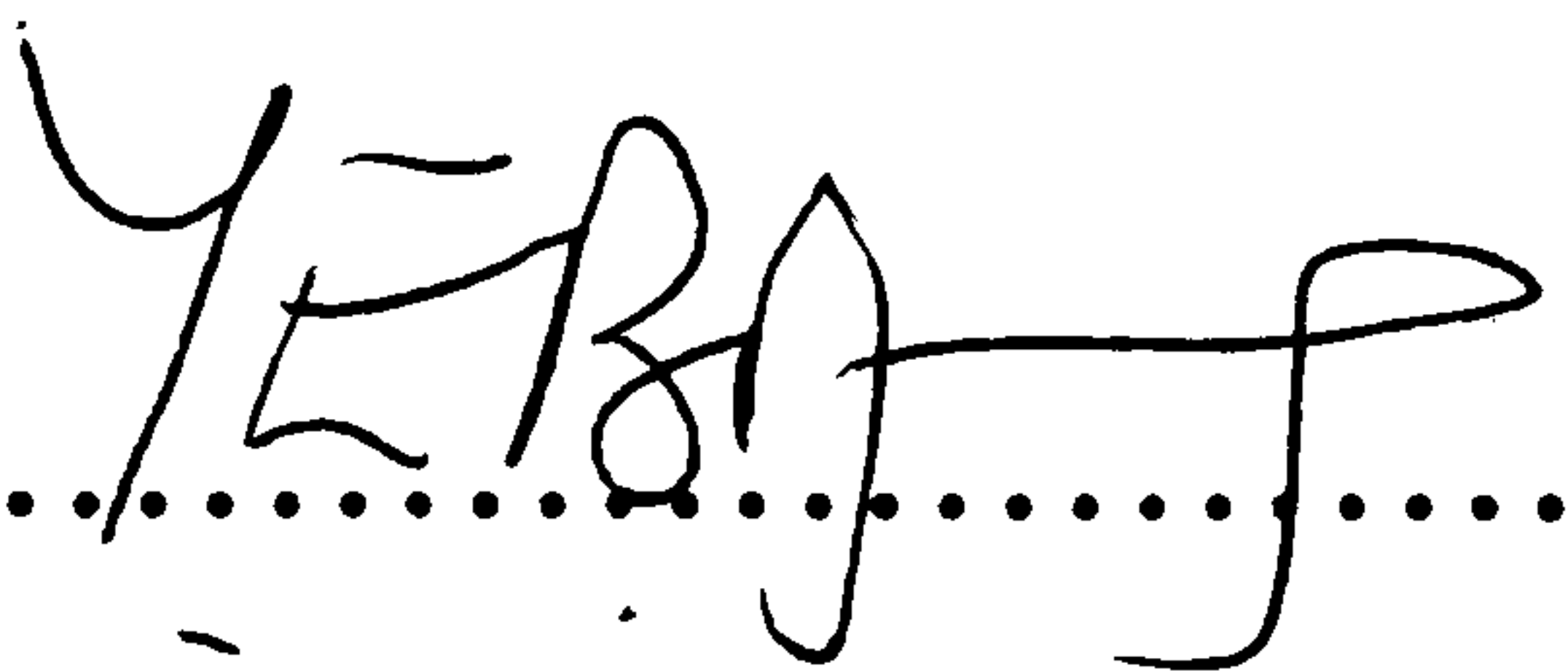
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### Declaration

I declare that the investigation reported in this dissertation and its writing-up are entirely my own work.



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Yahya Ebrima Bojang

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## Abstract

This dissertation investigates the impact of Gambia's secondary school selection examination on the process and content of upper primary school education. Using research perspectives provided from such empirical traditions as the "Diploma Disease" (Dore, 1976) and orientations to learning (Marton et al., 1976; Entwistle et al., 1983), opinions were sought from respondent groups in The Gambia in order to illuminate more fully the various issues. Data were collected by means of questionnaires, interviews and written exercises from six samples: primary school heads; parents (of the Primary Six children); CEE class teachers; Form One pupils (CEE passes); Primary Six pupils (CEE preparation class) and educational administrators. Each group (except the last) was sampled separately from the rural and urban regions of the country, so as to seek any differences there may be in the effects of the examination in the two areas.

Major topics studied were the influences of primary leavers' employment prospects on examination; attitudes towards the CEE and primary schooling in general; and distortions in the process and content of upper primary education, as a consequence of these pressures.

It is concluded that:

- 1 Employment prospects for primary leavers are seen to be much poorer than prospects for those passing the CEE.
- 2 People hold unfavourable perceptions of the level of education achieved at the end of primary schooling.
- 3 The CEE is approached in a wholly instrumental way.

- 4 Orientations to primary schooling outcomes are more instrumental than intrinsic.
- 5 There are distortions of recommended teaching and learning processes and of the content of the primary curriculum.
- 6 Finally, these effects hold fairly equally in both rural and urban regions of the country.

These conclusions are broadly in line with those of other researchers, although the similarity of perceptions from rural and urban samples, and the results concerning teachers' selective attention to different sub-groups of children were not as anticipated.

The conclusions appear to have implications for the practice and content of primary schooling in The Gambia. In this regard, issues such as poor employment prospects for primary leavers and instrumental orientation to the CEE and primary schooling generally seem to influence parents, primary school heads, teachers and pupils to have more regard for the CEE than for teaching and learning related to the recommended primary curriculum. This practice distorts the aims, processes and content of the primary curriculum. These distortions could have social and economic implications as well. In particular, failure in the final classes of primary to cover the recommended range of subjects means that the government's plan to provide, for all the regions, education deemed 'relevant' may be difficult to achieve at the end of the primary course.



### List of Abbreviations

A	Achievement
BPMRU	Book Production and Material Resources Unit
CEE	Common Entrance Examination
CPE	Certificate of Primary Education
CUSO	Canadian Universities Service Overseas
DD	The Diploma Disease
EA	East Africa
DE	Department of Education
EO	Establishment Office
EO 1	Educational Officer (1)/Representative of Education Department
EO 2	Educational Officer (2)/Representative of the Curriculum Development Centre
EO 3	Educational Officer (3)/Representative of the West African Examinations Council, Banjul Office
EPU	Educational Planning Unit
GG	The Gambia Government
GO	General Orders
GTU	The Gambia Teachers' Union
HSE	High School Entry
IBRD	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development
IDRC	International Development Research Centre
IIEA	International Institute of Educational Evaluation
ILO	International Labour Organisation
JASPA	Jobs and Skills Programme for Africa
JP	Job Preparation

Abbreviations (contd.)

K	Knowledge
ME	Ministry of Education
MEPID	Ministry of Economic Planning and Industry
NFE	Non-formal Education
PQ	Personal Quality
SIDA	Swedish International Development Agency
SIU	School Inspectorate Unit
SOLO	Structure of Observed Learning Outcomes
SPQ	Study Process Questionnaire
STLC	Secondary Technical Leaving School Certificate
TC	Teachers' Centres
U	University
UN	United Nations
UPE	Universal Primary Education
UQT	Unqualified Teachers
WA	West Africa
WAEC	West African Examination Council

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## CHAPTER 1

### DISCUSSION OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

#### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

The main purpose of this chapter is to discuss in detail the problem being studied in this dissertation. It begins by providing brief general background information on The Gambia. Following this, the problem will be identified as well as the objectives, and working assumptions formulated for investigating it. The final section traces the key sources of the problem within educational and economic settings in The Gambia.

#### 1.2 SOME BACKGROUND DATA ON THE GAMBIA

##### 1.2.1 Land, Population and Main Regions

The country on which this study is based, The Gambia, is situated on the west coast of Africa on the extreme north between latitudes 13°N and 14°N and occupies both sides of the River Gambia. It is about 487 km long and 24 km wide, and the total land area is about 10,402.6 km<sup>2</sup>. In 1984, the total population of the country was 0.6 million (GG/ED, 1981).

Like most developing countries, The Gambia is divided into an urban area and a rural area. Banjul, the capital, is situated in the urban area. In terms of population, about 80% of the

people, mostly peasant farmers, live and work in the rural area while the rest stay in the urban area. In this latter region, the principal economic activity undertaken by most people, especially in Banjul, is paid employment in the government departments, parastatals, tourism, and in the commercial and industrial firms. In both regions opportunities exist for self-employment; however, in general, those in the urban area are more lucrative.

### 1.2.2 Brief History

The Gambia's early links with the outside world, particularly the west, began in the 15th century following a series of exploratory, trade, and missionary expeditions into the country by the Portuguese. In the subsequent years, other European nations such as the French and the British also began similar trips into the country. Due mainly to the failure of most of these pioneering ventures, European nations became less interested in visiting the country. However, Britain later regained interest in the affairs of The Gambia, and between 1765 and 1783 the British Crown made several unsuccessful attempts to gain its control, but it was not until 1821 that she was able to colonise the country. Henceforth, overall responsibility for The Gambia was transferred to the British Crown until 1965 when the country became independent.

The establishment of British colonial rule enabled western education to be imported into the country spearheaded by Christian missions and the colonial administration respectively. This was considered necessary by the colonial administration since it would enable local citizens to serve as catalysts in the nation-building

process. In a similar vein, the missionaries wanted to train local counterparts who could assist them in their evangelical work. Both processes ultimately led to the introduction of white-collar jobs and salaried employment to the country around the colonial area. In the ensuing years, these western influences gradually spread into several parts of the interior (Gailey, 1964; Gray, 1966).

### 1.2.3 The Economy

The society thrives mainly on a single cash crop economy as groundnuts is the principal export earner. Therefore, with the exception of resources accrued from loans or external aid, the financing of important development projects such as those related to education normally depends largely on income derived from the sale of groundnuts.

Within the country, the rural region has much more potential for economic development given that it is the main producer of the country's chief cash and food crop. According to government sources, about 30% of the Gross National Product which yields about 90% of export revenue, obtains from the rural regions (GG/MEPID, 1981).

### 1.2.4 The National School System

In The Gambia the educational system comprises primary and post-primary institutions (see Appendix A). It provides six years of primary education, four years of secondary technical education, five to seven years of secondary high and two to three years of

tertiary education. Children begin primary schooling at the age of eight years; they then sit the Common Entrance Examination (the CEE) at the end of Primary Six in order to go to a post-primary school. In secondary technical schools, students who complete the prescribed course may sit the Secondary Technical Leaving Certificate Examination (STLC). Secondary high school leavers on the other hand are eligible to do GCE 'O' Level and 'A' Level examinations.

The Ministry of Education, Youth, Sports and Culture, headed by a Cabinet Minister and assisted by a Parliamentary Secretary, exercises responsibility for the formulation and implementation of educational policy and for financial control. The Department of Education, headed by the Director of Education, has overall responsibility for the control and administration of the education system. Apart from the Department of Education, the Director also oversees such educational establishments as the Educational Planning Unit (EPU), the Book Production and Material Resources Unit (BPMRU), the Non-Formal Educational Services (NFE), the Curriculum Development Centre (CDC), School Broadcasting Services (SBS), the West African Examination Council Office (WAEC), and recently the School Inspectorate Unit (SIU) and Teachers' Centres (TC).



### 1.3 FORMULATING THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

This investigation is launched in order to assess the effects of Gambia's secondary school selection examination on primary education. This examination known as the CEE was introduced after independence and, presently, it is the only device used in selecting primary completers for post-primary education.

A number of circumstances that prevailed before independence tended to favour the establishment of the CEE as a single, centralised secondary school selection test. For instance, during this period, primary education was provided jointly by the government and private bodies such as Christian missions. As a result of multiple sources of funding, as well as administration of primary education, the methods adopted in selecting primary leavers for post-primary schools were more flexible and varied.

As a case in point, prior to independence, a great number of primary leavers in both urban and rural areas had access to Form One of high schools by passing the then Standard Four School Leaving Certificate Examinations which were recognised and administered by all the agencies providing primary education. In addition, a few schools in the urban sector provided an additional access to high schools through the use of a test known as Standard Seven School Leaving Certificate Examination. These schools were also provided by the government and missions. At the end of the seven year course, pupils attempted this examination and those successful went on either to Form Two or Form Three of high schools. As the discussion on school expansion will show, all the high schools were located in the urban area during most of the pre-independence

period. In addition to these different selection devices, some of the missions instituted extra mechanisms whereby a certain proportion of places in their high schools was allocated to children who belonged to their own church denominations.

After independence, when the government assumed full responsibility for the provision and management of primary education, plans were implemented to replace all previous secondary school tests with a common examination which later became known as the CEE. Apart from being able to afford all primary leavers the opportunity to do one examination, the government was also convinced that it would enable individuals who exhibited higher scholastic attainments to be identified for further schooling and training in order to serve in vital sectors of the economy. Likewise, on the basis of the government's desire to introduce Universal Primary Education (UPE), it was contended that the use of a centralised examination with much emphasis on foundation courses would greatly assist the development of basic skills, particularly for the majority of primary leavers who could not go to secondary schools.

The establishment of the CEE as a common selection device was less problematic largely as a result of Gambia's membership of WAEC. The Council, founded during the colonial period by some of the Anglophone states in West Africa, serves as an inter-regional organ of cooperation in matters relating to examinations and education in general. When the CEE was first introduced, the preparation and conduct of the examination was undertaken by WAEC Head Offices in Nigeria and Ghana. Following the creation in 1973 of a WAEC Office in Banjul, the design and administration of the CEE were jointly undertaken by WAEC personnel, local educational

administrators and teachers. The Council has since its inception assigned a dual role to all the examinations it conducts. Thus the CEE is "a competitive selection examination and an examination establishing settled educational standards" (WAEC, 1950: 4). Similarly, with regard to the major goals of primary education, the Ten Year Education Policy (GG, 1976) states that education at this level should cater for two different clientele: those who complete the course and qualify for entry into post-primary schools, and the great majority whose formal education would terminate before or at the end of the primary course.

However, as will be noted later in this dissertation, the dual role associated with the CEE tends not to be pursued as desired in upper primary schools possibly because teachers and pupils seem to be preoccupied more with the selective and allocative functions at the expense of the educative functions. The prevalence of circumstances such as the restricted content of the CEE in relation to the primary curriculum, as well as the categorisation of the post- primary school system into two different schools named earlier, partly tend to motivate schools to be more keen on the selective role of the CEE. As will be shown later in this chapter, differential perceptions by society regarding social outcomes associated with the two post-primary schools seem to contribute significantly to the problems of the CEE.

Therefore, contrary to the recommended objectives, the overriding goal associated with the CEE seems to be to identify persons for further schooling which prepares individuals for possible appointment to paid employment in the modern sector. This is because access to such jobs is dependent upon success in the



examination. This enables individuals to have access to a post-primary school, especially secondary high, and possibly proceed abroad to enrol in a college or university to pursue higher training leading to the award of advanced qualifications. These credentials are essential prerequisites to securing immediate and direct entrance into top jobs in the modern sector. Various social and financial attractions associated with these jobs, which tend to explain school leavers' preference for them, are discussed later in this chapter.

As a result of the importance usually accorded to secondary education by parents and primary school children, in particular places in secondary high schools, scarcity of its provision in the past has created excessive pressures for educationists, parents and primary schools thus exacerbating the problems of the CEE. This acute shortage of secondary high school provision is often attributable to gross imbalances between Form One places in these schools and those in the upper primary school classes. Such disparity was evident because, since independence, as will be seen later in this chapter, state policy on education consistently stimulated the growth of primary schools faster than those of post primary. For example, at the time this study was being conducted, there were 161 primary schools with a total enrolment of 7,388 pupils in the termination classes. In contrast there were seven secondary high schools and 16 secondary technical schools with a combined enrolment of 2,735 pupils in Form One classes.

Restrictions on post-primary school provision, especially places in coveted secondary high schools, have in the past resulted in a state of affairs whereby very few pupils were enrolled in the



latter schools. For instance, of the 7,388 primary completers cited above, only 657 or 8.9% were eligible to have places in secondary high schools while 2,087 or 28.1% qualified for admission into secondary technical schools (GG/ED, 1981). Therefore, despite a relatively higher accommodation rate at secondary technical schools, the common practice tends to be for a greater number of leavers to resit the CEE the following year since they and their parents often assume that it is the secondary high schools which cater for the educational and job expectations of pupils. A more detailed treatment of these issues will be indicated later in this chapter in the discussion on school expansion.

Since access to desired secondary high schools is limited, parents and their children, as well as primary schools usually complain that only very few candidates who attempt the CEE enter high schools. In previous years the response of primary schools to this shortage appears to be the adoption of examination-oriented instruction, particularly in the final classes. This practice often inspires teachers to reject the greater part of the prescribed curriculum and replace it with what has been commonly referred to as the 'examination syllabus'. The International Labour Organisation (ILO) has undertaken a study on Educated Youth Unemployment in The Gambia which succinctly corroborates this assertion: "... the focus of the last years of primary school is not education, but the CEE ... which is of course the necessary first step to paper qualifications" (ILO/JASPA, 1981a: 34).

Equally, the Ten Year Plan in Education (1976-86) expressed concern over the excessive use of examination-centred instruction in primary schools and its likely impact on pupils:

The practice of primary school teachers to teach what is required for the CEE to the total exclusion of everything else puts the pupil who enters the secondary school in a handicapped position often needing remedial work.

(GG/ED, 1976: 7)

In addition, several educationists, especially those working in the CDC and EPU, have continually referred to some of the adverse consequences that might arise from adopting an examination-directed curriculum in primary schools. They often refer to its likely impact on teaching and learning related to the primary curriculum. The CDC in particular often complains that the CEE works against their curriculum reform exercises by motivating primary schools not to give much consideration to some of the relevant subjects recommended for use in these schools such as Science, Social Studies, Art and Crafts, and Home Economics, all of which are not examined in the CEE. In view of these and similar shortcomings, the government had formulated plans to review the examination possibly before 1986. Unfortunately such plans could not be implemented, largely because the main bodies responsible for reviewing the examination, such as the WAEC, CDC and the Department of Education, were ill-prepared for the proposed reform exercise. However, despite several criticisms which are usually voiced against the functions of the CEE, especially its alleged impact in distorting primary education, there were no empirical findings to shed more light on such possible distortions. The research to be reported in this dissertation was thereby undertaken to provide such data.

#### 1.4 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This dissertation will be concerned with a series of investigations related to the following objectives:

- 1) to sample the views and experiences of selected groups of respondents on the CEE and issues related to it;
- 2) to determine how the respondent groups' perceptions on the above issues might influence their attitudes towards teaching and learning in upper primary school classes;
- 3) and to explore the above-mentioned investigations in an urban area and a rural area.

The precise questions to be addressed in this dissertation are:

- 1) What kinds of social and economic values do various respondent groups associate with the CEE?
- 2) How might their perceptions of these values affect their expectations of primary school outcomes?
- 3) What likely effects will such attitudes and expectations have on their notions about teaching and learning in the upper primary school?
- 4) Will the above-mentioned attitudes, views and experiences about the CEE, primary school outcomes, and alleged effects on upper primary education be more pronounced in an urban area or in a rural area?



## 1.5 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

These objectives were investigated partly in relation to some of the major assumptions enunciated in the Diploma Disease (DD) argument which was highly popularised in both developed and developing countries through research findings reported by Dore (1975, 1976, 1981).

Over the years the DD thesis has gained much popularity, particularly in developing countries, because it purports to highlight a series of educational, social and economic effects that could arise from using formal education as a vehicle to identify and train individuals for further schooling or employment, or to promote social mobility in the modern sector of the economy. The principal themes explicit in the argument, together with its major characteristics and symptoms, are succinctly reported in a much-quoted book, The Diploma Disease, written by Dore (1976). According to Dore, the ever-growing bureaucratisation of modern economic societies acts continually to universalise selection for employment or careers through the use of educational credentials in many resource-poor developing countries. Because of the great value that is usually attached to these qualifications in securing lucrative and scarce salaried jobs for the holders, educational institutions are usually preoccupied with the allocative functions of schooling, in most instances to the exclusion of pursuing intrinsic goals, for example, learning for its own sake, or for knowledge. The original conceptualisation of the DD theory in its simplified version presupposes a linear interrelationship between the use of academic qualifications by employers in the modern sector



labour market, the higher demand for education that is often generated, the impact this has in intensifying an examination-oriented education in schools, and the resultant distortion on education which could have long-term adverse effects on people and society at large.

Dore has also identified several salient characteristics as important indicators of DD: these include the use of centralised selection and certification examinations such as the CEE which are in great use in most developing countries. According to Dore as well as others, e.g. Somerset (1983), the main characteristics associated with DD are more discernible in developing countries than in developed countries especially because of higher expectations of school leavers in the former countries towards salaried jobs, and acute resource scarcity that restricts both access to post-primary schools and the creation of an adequate supply of paid jobs.

Similarly, some of the theories and methods derived from studies on 'orientation' to learning were used in order to extend the conceptual framework of the DD theory. This latter research paradigm originated from Sweden (Marton et al., 1975a), but was later extended to several developing countries and recently to a few developed countries. In contrast to traditional research strategies, research on 'orientation' focuses mainly on the learner's perspective and thus stresses awareness of the learner, the use of relevant content and context of learning process and outcome (Marton et al., 1975a; Entwistle et al., 1983).

In many of the studies, investigators examine the influences of various attributes on learning process and outcome

with reference to what is now commonly known as 'orientation' to learning. As Taylor et al. (1981: 2) aptly explain, orientation is: "... the student's own aim and attitudes towards a course of study and success and failure are in terms of the ability of the student to fulfil these personal goals". 'Orientation' to learning theory in particular asserts that an individual's orientation to learning might affect his approach or strategy, which in turn could determine the learning outcome.

Some of the previous investigations related to both research traditions have revealed a wide range of the effects of examinations and related scholastic tasks on education. For instance, research into DD has revealed the influences of examinations which perform functions similar to the CEE in distorting teaching, learning and curricula (Little, 1978; Lewin, 1980; Boakye et al., 1982). Similarly, studies on 'orientation' to learning show for example that students' personal perceptions of a course of study (or orientations) could affect both the quality of learning process and outcome (Marton et al., 1975; Biggs, 1979; Entwistle et al., 1983). Likewise a number of studies have reported on a variety of illuminative descriptive typologies which help to shed more light on how students learn in relation to internal and external demands which impinge on them (Fransson, 1977).

However, as the survey of empirical work related to these research perspectives hopes to show in chapter 2, especially in studies on DD, the linear conceptual network apparent in the argument in its original form has been questioned. Some of those studies will show that a variety of modifying factors exist

especially in developing countries such as self-employment prospects, cultural practices that accord less prominence to values associated with western education, and extreme isolation from urban areas, which tend to make the linkages in DD theory less tenable in some countries. Aside from these shortcomings, most of the investigations into DD also seem to have some methodological problems. For example, only a few of the studies conducted in developing countries selected samples from both urban and rural areas.

As regards work on 'orientation' to learning, the main problems associated with the studies, in particular the earlier ones, include the collection and analysis of qualitative data, the use of introspection, selection of suitable reading materials and sample size. However, recent attempts to extend the conceptual and methodological backgrounds of the pioneering studies have ameliorated some of these problems (Sharp and Thomson, 1982).

The investigator's own inquiry attempted to obviate some of these shortcomings by collecting a variety of qualitative and quantitative data from urban and rural populations which seem to reflect more realistically the social and economic strata existing in most developing countries. Part of this main data was obtained through using some of the research methods in vogue in the DD line of inquiry such as interviews and questionnaires. The rest was obtained from certain prominent methods that evolved from work on 'orientation' to learning, for instance, essay-writing and sentence-completion tests.

At the time of planning the study, investigations into both the conceptual linkages apparent in DD and 'orientation' to learning



theories were anticipated. But, as will be stated later (see chapter 3), this dissertation will not be concerned with assessing those linkages inherent in the two theories. Instead, it will be mainly concerned with assessing the objectives stated previously. Having identified the research problem as well as discussing the theoretical background of the study, some of the major causes of the problems associated with the CEE in the national school system and in the economy are discussed in the rest of this chapter.

## 1.6 MAJOR SOURCES OF PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH COMMON ENTRANCE EXAMINATION

### 1.6.1 School-Related Sources

As the data on school expansion in the two regions of study will show (chapter 3), there were very few school places in the country before independence and most of the facilities were concentrated in urban areas. Because of this, coupled with the government's objective of achieving UPE after independence, a number of educational planning papers relating to the development of the school system were launched. These were particularly the Five Year Plan (GG/ED, 1961-65), the Sleight Report (GG/ED, 1965-75), and the present plan (GG/ED, 1976-86).

Apart from advocating UPE, the respective plans recommended strategies aimed at achieving this objective as well as the desired expansion in post-primary schools. These strategies included, for instance, the construction of more school buildings throughout the



country and making projections on school expansion. For example, the Sleight Report envisaged an enrolment of 19,000 in 1965 to 30,000 in 1975. The current plan on the other hand originally projected a student population of 40,000 at primary by 1986. However, this was achieved by the end of 1980; thus another projection of 74,000 was made. This plan also introduced several measures to boost enrolment in primary schools such as free but non-compulsory primary education, free school meals, appointment of more Koranic and female teachers and the establishment of school farms and gardens especially in rural areas.

On post-primary education, the current plan recommended less expansion because of constraints on vital resources needed to implement growth at this level. This policy was also consonant with government plans to restrain rapid expansion in these schools. Thus, in secondary high schools, Form One intake was projected to increase from 538 in 1975 to 760 in 1985/86 (GG/MEPID, 1981: 28). In the following discussions, the impact of these policies on growth trends in schools and transition to post-primary in the whole country are examined in relation to how they generate competition in the CEE.

## **1.6.2 Major Trends in School Expansion**

### **1.6.2.1 Primary school expansion**

Some of the major trends in the numerical expansion of primary schools after independence with specific reference to growth in student population and institutions broken down into periods are summarised below.

Table 1.1: Primary School Expansion After Independence by  
Level of Schools: 1965-1983 (National)

Primary Level	Period				
	1965	1970	1975	1980	1983
<u>Primary</u>					
Schools	77	95	94	134	164
Students	11,504	16,867	22,629	37,644	53,744

Sources: 1. Working Papers, Ministry of Economic Planning,  
Gambia Government, 1980, p.26.

2. Educational Statistics (1982-1983), Ministry and  
Department of Education, Gambia Government, 1983, p.2.

Thus, between 1965 and 1970, the number of primary schools has increased by 23.3%. The student population in schools has also increased by 47%. These increases were highly influenced by the Five Year Policy on Education (1961-65) that predated independence as well as the Sleight Report (1965-75), both of which were discussed earlier.

Due mainly to resource constraints, the next five years were viewed by the government as a period in which to consolidate existing facilities in primary schools rather than to establish more schools. Consequently, the number of primary schools was very slightly reduced between 1970 and 1975. Despite this temporary halt on school expansion, the creation of additional streams in existing schools enabled the student population to increase by 34.2% over the period.

Following this period of reduced expansion in the number of primary schools, there was a real boom in the setting up of new schools between 1975 and 1980. This was mainly due to a variety of factors referred to earlier, for example, enrolment incentives provided in the Ten-Year Education Policy (1976-1986); sustained effects by missions on school expansion; and the emergence of self-help projects on school building, in particular in rural areas. Thus, during this period, the number of primary schools rose by 42.6% and, likewise, the number of students had risen by 66% over the period.

The recent years were equally characterised by higher expansion in the provision of primary schools. Therefore, between 1980 and 1983, the number of primary schools increased by 22.3%. Similarly, primary school enrolment rose by about 42.8% over the period.

#### **1.6.2.2 Post-primary school expansion**

The data below on the expansion of post-primary schools reveal periods of great expansion and stagnation in the schools concerned.

Table 1.2: Post-Primary School Expansion After Independence by  
Level of Schools: 1965-1983 (National)

Level	Period				
	1965	1970	1975	1980	1983
<u>Secondary Technical</u>					
Schools	9	15	17	16	16
Students	1,900	2,867	4,200	5,274	7,668
<u>Secondary High</u>					
Schools	4	4	5	7	7
Students	1,092	1,422	1,591	3,040	3,698

Sources: 1. Working Papers, Ministry of Economic Planning,  
Gambia Government, 1980: 26.

2. Educational Statistics (1982-1983), Ministry and  
Department of Education, Gambia Government, 1983: 3-5.

For example, from 1965 to 1970, the number of secondary technical schools increased by 66.7%. Accordingly, total enrolment in schools rose by 50.1% for the period.

In comparison, only two secondary technical schools were opened between 1970 and 1975. However, the creation of additional streams in these schools during the period has enabled the student population to rise steeply by about 47% for the period. This increase in enrolment was however not sustained during the ensuing five years as a result of a reduction in the number of schools from 17 to 16 following the conversion of one of the schools into a secondary high school. In consequence, between 1975 and 1980, intake in secondary technical schools rose only by 25.6% or just a



quarter of the increase in the previous period. Likewise, from 1980 to 1983, the total number of secondary technical schools did not increase although several streams were added to some of the schools which made it possible for the student population to rise above 45.4% by 1983. This halt in the growth of secondary technical schools was due to the government's desire to consolidate existing facilities rather than to open new schools.

The adoption of these policies had helped to augment school provision. In this regard, attendance ratio at primary rose from 27.9% in 1975 to 40.3% in 1980 and by 1985 it was anticipated to reach 52.0% (GG/EPU, 1980). However, according to the Economic Planning Ministry (GG/MEPID, 1981), attendance ratio and entry ratio at primary might rise by 71% and 75% respectively if the present rate of repetition and expansion in schools were to be sustained.

Therefore, although the country failed to attain UPE in 1980, which was the target date set by the United Nations (UN) for the achievement of UPE in Africa at the Addis Ababa Summit (1961), yet the major goal of increasing primary school facilities was achieved. Likewise, most of the projected expansion rates related to post-primary schools have been attained. However, as the next section will highlight, there was greater scope for expanding primary provision than that for post-primary. Such disparities, which seemed to limit the progression ratio to post-primary schools especially secondary high schools, tended to create further problems for the CEE.

### 1.6.2.3 Transition to post-primary

As revealed in the previous sections, the primary school population increased dramatically from 1965 to 1985. We now examine the enrolment in post-primary schools and assess its effect on the increasing primary school population (Table 1.3).

For each respective year the transition rate is defined as the ratio of the number of pupils enrolled in Form One of secondary high schools and secondary technical schools in that year to the number of pupils enrolled in Primary Six in the previous year. Similar procedures were used in calculating repetition rates and dropout rates. According to the Department of Education, the transition rates were calculated from Primary Six enrolment and not from the CEE presentation lists because the latter are always higher in that they include Form One pupils in secondary technical schools who usually opt for resits in the CEE.

Since access to both types of post-primary school depends on performance in the CEE, an attempt will be made to refer to several points from Table 1.3 which are likely to affect competition for the examination. Amongst the factors likely to reduce anxieties about the CEE are the consistent upward trends in enrolment in the respective schools. These trends are reflected in the transition rates for the schools concerned. The combined progression rates seem to place them among the highest in Africa. For instance, up to 1979, only about 13% of the CPE candidates in Kenya had opportunities to crossover to secondary schools (Somerset, 1981: 5). Similarly, in Zambia, in 1982, only 15.3% of elementary school leavers could have access to secondary schools (Alexander, 1983: 210). Therefore, provided no artefacts were associated with

Table 1.3: A Comparison of Transition Rates to Post-Primary Schools:  
1977-1982

ENROLMENT IN FORM ONE					CANDIDATES WITHOUT PLACES				
Year	Previous P6 Popu- lation	Secondary High		Secondary Technical		Combined Transi- tion Rate (%)	P6 Repeaters		Others
		No.	TR (%)	No.	TR (%)		No.	TR (%)	
76/77	4353	532	12.2	1279	29.3	41.6	898	42.8	1147 23.6
77/78	4165	536	12.8	1233	29.6	42.5	1996	40.5	1341 26.3
78/79	4648	540	11.6	1442	31.0	42.6	2019	43.9	1484 27.1
79/80	5263	594	11.2	1520	28.8	40.2	2153	43.5	1405 24.8
80/81	5996	608	10.1	1703	28.4	38.7	2720	45.4	762 13.2
81/82	6573	657	9.9	2078	31.6	41.6	2514	38.2	2139 29.0
82/83	7091	763	10.7	2232	31.4	42.2	2654	37.4	2086 27.0

Source: Educational Statistics (1982-1983), GG, ED, 1983: 90.



the computation of the rates, and if society's perceptions on the social outcomes associated with attendance in the respective post-primary schools were similar, individual enrolment figures and the overall transition rates might help to ease the degree of competition for the CEE in primary schools.

On the other hand, several circumstances seem to surround the crossover rates and post-primary education which could inflate the competition for the CEE. With regard to the computation of transition rates, it was stated previously that the Department of Education did not use the CEE presentations when working out the rates, and instead Primary Six enrolment population was used. Failure to utilise the CEE presentations which usually include candidates from secondary technical schools, and are therefore higher in proportion compared to Primary Six population, may inflate the transition rates. Another factor likely to reduce the statistics on Primary Six enrolment related to the problem of collecting accurate figures, especially given that some schools might be hesitant to give their actual data. Therefore, without these shortcomings, it may be argued that the crossover rates might be smaller than they were during the period under review. Consequently, whereas the annual average rate of increase in Primary Six classes was 8.81% during the period concerned, that of coveted high schools was 7.2%.

Apart from these statistical problems, wider variations in societal perceptions concerning the importance given to the two types of school in fulfilling pupils' educational and vocational expectations could reduce the great optimism likely to be associated with the relatively higher transition rates. As the discussion on

major differentials between the schools hopes to show later in this chapter, there appears to be an absolute preference for secondary high school education relative to that of secondary technical school in the country. Consequently, the combined crossover rates might seem less important to many parents and their children; instead what might be more appealing to them might be the transition rates for prestigious secondary high schools which were 11.6, 11.2, 10.1, 10.0, and 10.8% during the period under review. Since these were much lower than those for secondary technical schools, competition for the CEE was not diminished in previous years.

Additionally, the repetition and push-out rates depicted in Table 1.3 were powerful sources in influencing competition for success in the CEE. It may be observed that the total for the two rates in each year was more than the corresponding rate in transition although the push-out rates were smaller than repetition rates. In the past, whereas repetition was mainly associated with a greater degree of anxiety, uncertainties and wastage of school resources, pupils who dropped out of primary were considered as failures because, unlike some other African countries, there are no formal pre-career schemes for primary leavers in The Gambia. Thus the data on transition appear to highlight several issues that might help to entrench the drive for success in the CEE which could ultimately enhance the demand for post-primary education, especially places in desired secondary high schools.

## 1.7 MAJOR DIFFERENCES BETWEEN POST-PRIMARY SCHOOLS

### 1.7.1 Criteria determining Access to the Schools

There are several major characteristics distinguishing the two categories of school which seem to intensify competition for the CEE. These seem to relate to entry requirements, curricula, and terminal examinations. Because parents and primary schools tend to be aware of such differentials, there appears to be the practice of discriminating against enrolment in technical schools in favour of places at secondary high schools. This section examines these differentials and their likely influences in increasing competition for the examination.

One such major differential appears to be the procedures determining entrance into the schools. The sole criterion being used to select pupils for entrance to the schools are cut-off marks obtained from their CEE results. The main consideration governing the allocation of cut-off marks is availability of places in post-primary schools. Thus, over the years these marks varied with the quality of pupils' performance in the CEE. The following data in Table 1.4 exemplify cut-off marks which were used to select the CEE candidates into post-primary schools during the 1981/82 session.



Table 1.4: Comparison of Cut-Off Marks designed for Entry into Post-Primary Schools: 1981/82

	Score Range	Number	% of Total
1	311-243	649	8.8
2	242-198	2614	35.4
3	197-0	4125	55.8

Source: Educational Statistics (1981-1982) (GG/ED, 1981: 48)

The above cut-off marks are raw scores obtained from the CEE results. The first two scores were used to place the CEE candidates in secondary high schools and secondary technical schools respectively while the third category comprised candidates who were not eligible for enrolment in the respective schools. The cut-off marks were obtained by rank-ordering candidates' scores in the CEE, and these were then divided into three main categories on the basis of places in the schools concerned.

The practice of maintaining differentials between cut-off marks fixed for post-primary schools was also noticeable over the past years. For instance, in 1979, cut-off marks for secondary high schools and secondary technical schools respectively were 264 and 211. Similarly, in 1980, 251 and 208 cut-off marks were fixed to determine entry into secondary high schools and secondary technical schools respectively.

Based on the foregoing differentials in cut-off marks between post-primary schools, there seem to be two different elements that might spur primary leavers to compete keenly for

places in secondary high schools relative to secondary technical schools; higher cut-off marks designed for entry into the coveted secondary high schools which relatively enrol fewer CEE candidates and also the previous evidence that these marks do fluctuate according to the number of places available. Therefore, in 1981, although the range for secondary high school cut-off marks, as shown in the preceding table, was greater than that of the secondary technical cut-off mark, this did not mean that in that year it was easier to enter secondary high schools than secondary technical schools. This is because the range in both instances was within artificial boundaries and therefore not predetermined before the CEE was taken.

#### 1.7.2 Curricular Differences

The curricula pursued in the respective schools also denote stark qualitative differences. In secondary high schools the main emphasis is on academic orientation although the curriculum is also supplemented by vocationally-oriented disciplines. In this regard, the schools give top priority to instruction in academic subjects such as Chemistry, Physics, Biology, Botany, Zoology, and foundation courses like English and Mathematics. In the schools, most of the resources needed to prepare students for these courses have been provided for. In addition, secondary high schools had been successful in the past in attracting more qualified teaching staff. Thus, at the time this investigation was launched, 71% of teachers in secondary high schools were graduates whereas there were no graduate tutors in secondary technical schools; furthermore, the

majority of teachers at secondary technical were untrained. Therefore students admitted to secondary high schools are likely to pursue a relatively higher level of academic and vocational courses. Consequently, the desire by parents and pupils for these courses seemed to enhance the competition in the CEE in previous years.

In contrast, the curriculum designed for secondary technical schools was at least in theory meant to emphasise vocationalisation. In this context, vocational courses such as Woodwork, Metalwork, Masonry, Commerce and Secretarial Studies were supposed to have featured more prominently in their instruction aided by other foundation and social science courses. These courses were specifically designed by the government either to assist in generating directly employable skills for participants or to help them have self-employed careers.

However, plans to vocationalise secondary technical schools were in the past less successful largely because of lack of financial resources which hampered the introduction of new courses, and the unavailability of necessary infrastructure and staffing. Apart from these problems, academic courses run in these schools are often perceived to be relatively lower in standard than those available in secondary high schools; therefore, students enrolled in the latter were always perceived by society to have undergone more solidly based academic and vocationally-oriented courses likely to meet their expectations. These differences had over the years escalated the competition in primary schools for places in secondary high schools instead of places in secondary technical schools.



### 1.7.3 Differences in Terminal Examinations

The last major difference which will be briefly described here is that relating to their final examinations. As stated earlier, secondary high school students who have been successful in the school leaving examinations are usually awarded a GCE 'O' Level or School Certificate with grades appropriate to their performance. A further two-year successful study at a sixth-form school would often enable a student to have direct access to higher educational institutions abroad to pursue advanced courses. In secondary technical schools, it was mentioned that graduates may in contrast be awarded the STLC on successfully completing the course. Compared to GCE or School Certificates, these certificates have less value as far as obtaining opportunities for higher academic or professional training are concerned. Furthermore, as will be noted in the discussions on the labour markets, secondary high school leaving certificates tended to have an edge over those obtained from secondary technical schools. These differentials are also an important source of competition in primary schools aimed at securing places in secondary high schools. Their impact on the labour market will be discussed later on.

In the past a number of policy decisions introduced by the government had helped to motivate parents, pupils and primary schools to be more conscious about these differences. One of these seemed to be the use of a merit-order list derived from the CEE results in order to give certain candidates a financial prop for their post-primary schooling. Under this scheme, which was instituted by the Education Department, candidates placed on this

list by virtue of their excellent performances in the CEE, are awarded free secondary high school education. In view of this, the CEE pass rate that entitles pupils to be considered for placement on the merit list has been viewed with greater concern in the country generally, given that this affords pupils the opportunity of being able to be enrolled in a famous school free of charge for five years. As there is no similar scheme operating for secondary technical schools, confining the scheme to secondary high schools has proved to be an extra source of competition for places in the latter schools over the years.

Two other government policies that have stirred up much competition in primary schools for post-primary schooling in recent years were schemes which allow students already admitted in secondary technical schools to transfer to secondary high schools. On the basis of the first one, the top 40 of secondary technical school graduates who had outstanding performances in their school leaving examinations usually transfer to the second or third form of secondary high schools. As regards the second scheme, a small number of clever students who have already secured places in Form One classes of secondary technical schools are allowed to resit the CEE and, if successful, they then transfer to Form One classes in secondary high schools after spending a year in the former schools. These schemes seem almost as powerful as the differentials cited in generating higher competition in the CEE.

## 1.8 SOCIO-ECONOMIC RELATED SOURCES

As mentioned earlier, it is often observed in The Gambia that parents' desire in seeking places in post-primary schools for their children is not merely for the latter to transfer at this level, but also to have places in secondary high schools rather than in secondary technical schools. These differential perceptions which seem to be reinforced by primary leavers and their teachers are usually based on their lack of faith in children's attendance in a secondary technical as far as their prospects in getting paid employment on leaving school are concerned. In view of the possible impact of such perceptions in exacerbating the competition for the CEE, the final section of this chapter examines how certain employers in government departments and vocational training institutions evaluate post-primary leaving certificates in hiring, promoting or training prospective employers. Likewise, other forces operating in the economy which tend to make society aware of such differential treatment will be examined. The discussions are confined to government agencies where the large majority of school leavers often want to get salaried jobs or pre-career training.

### 1.8.1 Evaluation of Post-Primary Qualifications in Government Establishments

Before examining the relative standing of secondary high and secondary technical leavers in the civil service and in vocational training schools, we shall first consider a number of recommendations made in the major Salary Review Reports commissioned



by the government after independence which tended to discriminate against STLC holders in favour of GCE holders in labour markets. These are the Nti Report (GG/Nti, 1969) and the Waller Report (GG/Waller, 1975). A clear cynicism of these reports against STLC holders may be cited from their recommendations pertaining to the clerical section of the civil service. For instance, before commissioning the Reviews, third grade clerks possessing STLC or similar qualifications could be promoted as Clerical Assistants on the basis of seniority, satisfactory service or on the recommendation of their Head of Department. However, the Nti Report considered such a promotion as a "back-door-entry" that ought to be replaced by a competitive examination and interview (GG/Nti, 1969: 7). The Report further recommended that posts designated for Clerical Assistants would be more appropriately filled by secondary high school graduates.

Likewise, the Waller Report, which stressed the significance of literacy for clerical work, advocated the appointment of secondary high school leavers as Clerical Assistants because:

A secondary technical leaver, with four years of secondary technical education is not only insufficiently literate to cope with clerical duties, but also incapable of developing the right degree of literacy through working on sub-clerical duties supplemented by training.

(GG/Waller, 1975: 31)

Thus, as far as the development of clerical skills was concerned, both reports tended to place great premium on academic qualifications at the expense of relevant on-the-job experience.

The implication of this seems to be that a five-year attendance at a secondary high school, culminating in the award of

GCE certificates, was a better proxy measure for skills essential to clerical work than a four-year secondary technical course leading to STLC. But, as the study conducted by the ILO (ILO/JASPA, W/A, 1981) related to The Gambia rightly observes, the Reports offered no justification for associating the development of clerical skills with possession of GCE rather than STLC. Therefore, whereas the pre-salary commission practices concerning the appointment of Clerical Assistants might not raise the demand for the limited places in secondary high schools as well as lead to higher competition in the CEE, in contrast the recommendations mentioned could possibly produce such effects.

Other recommendations may be cited from the Report which might also influence the demand for secondary schooling and competition in the CEE. In particular, the Waller Report provides direct entry into the executive cadre for individuals possessing GCE passes, while for others, they have to plod on for many years before entering the grade regardless of their on-the-job experiences. As regards the starting scale for locally trained nursing sisters, Nti for example, recommended that those qualified and who had GCE passes were to have an incremental credit above those without. Thus, even if non-GCE holders had accumulated better results from their training, they would still be on a scale lower than GCE holders.

However, despite some of these recommendations, the government has provided different entry routes to jobs especially in the clerical and technical fields which seem popular to school leavers. Accordingly, those wishing to enter lower grades in the clerical services must either have passed the appropriate entrance examination, possess the required number of GCE passes, have the

relevant experience or have been successful in the Clerical Assistant Proficiency Examinations. But, candidates who either passed the clerical entrance examination or GCE would have priority consideration. Similar criteria govern initial entry into the technical section of the civil service (GG/EO, 1977).

Thus, as far as entry into initial grades in these fields is concerned, and promotions, in theory both secondary high and secondary technical graduates seem to have been catered for by various regulations. This evidence is borne out through the emphasis given to the use of criteria which were less academically oriented such as pre-career training skills, relevant professional or trade tests and acquisition of appropriate on-the-job experiences. The adoption of these regulations might help to curtail the monopoly that GCE holders tended to have over STLC holders in the job markets. On the other hand, GCE candidates seemed to have far more advantages over STLC holders. In this regard, in both the clerical and technical sections of the civil service, GCE certificates have been prescribed as entry criteria while STLC were not. Because of this, graduates from secondary high are more likely to secure these jobs than those from secondary technical. Furthermore, although detailed discussions concerning primary leavers' employment prospects in the modern sector labour market will be presented in Chapter 4, neither of the Salary Review Reports stipulated the CEE as a test instrument in determining access to either clerical or technical jobs.

Additional evidence regarding the higher relative rating of GCE over STLC might be gleaned from a survey of admission requirements prescribed for some of the locally-based professional



and vocational training centres charged with the responsibility of training middle and lower level personnel. One of these, the Veterinary Training School, offers pre-service training courses for Livestock Assistants and Livestock Inspectors respectively. Candidates may be accepted as trainee Livestock Assistants if they have the requisite number of relevant subjects in GCE 'O' levels, while those wishing to pursue a Livestock Inspectors' course must possess either GCE 'O' level passes or STLC.

On successfully completing the fifteen-month training course respectively, Livestock Assistants are usually designated on grade 5, 6 and 7, while Livestock Inspectors are often placed on grade 4. Therefore, whereas secondary technical school leavers are normally not considered as trainees for the Livestock Assistant course whose graduates enjoy relatively higher salaries, they are more likely only to be considered for training as Livestock Inspectors, and even then only if they were not competing with secondary high school graduates who could easily outstrip them on the basis of their GCE certificates. On the other hand, graduates from secondary high school, possessing GCE qualifications, might have access to both courses.

Similarly, in the constituent schools of The Gambia College, secondary high school graduates could have an edge over graduates from secondary technical. For instance, in the School of Education, Agriculture and Nursing, criteria such as relevant pre-service experience, success in the entrance examination and possession of either GCE or STLC are required for admission into training programmes. But GCE holders could decidedly displace STLC holders when selection for trainees is being held in the schools

concerned. Furthermore, as from 1983, candidates having the requisite number of GCE passes could undergo a two-year teacher training course rather than pursuing the normal three-year course.

Thus, even if the two classes of leavers may have access to the aforementioned vocational training centres, on the other hand, those from secondary high were more likely to be considered for training. In the past, these differences seemed to influence parents, prospective primary leavers and their teachers to be more interested in pupils' attendance in secondary high than in secondary technical.

The above-mentioned trend, popularly known as qualification escalation, has been noted in India (Dore, 1976) and in Ghana (JASPA, 1981). In these countries, huge proportions of disparity exist between available modern sector jobs and the school leaver population wanting such jobs. This situation creates a surplus of educated job seekers in the labour force. As a result, employers often raise the level of qualifications they stipulate in recruiting personnel for employment. Therefore in these countries and in The Gambia, the practice tends to be to raise the pace of competition, especially for examinations that screen students for placement in post-primary schools. In The Gambia, such competitions, whose ultimate goal seems to be to qualify for credentials needed as initial pre-conditions for acquiring scarce but lucrative modern sector jobs, were further heightened in previous years by a variety of attractions connected with those jobs which are examined in the rest of this chapter.

### 1.8.2 Regional Disparities in Income

Over the years a number of factors connected with the labour market have influenced individuals to be more concerned with differential evaluations of post-primary school certificates referred to earlier. One of these related to wider differentials between rural and urban incomes. For instance, the ILO study cited (ILO/JASPA/W/A, op. cit.) in particular noted that, in 1977, per capita income of an average family size in the rural agricultural sector ranged between D260 and D280 (D5 = £1) whereas that of the urban per capita income was D580.21, or more than twice that of the rural sector. The study further observed that, in 1980, the annual income earned by an employee on the lowest scale in the modern sector was four times higher than the rural per capita income.

Similarly, in more recent years, despite reimbursements by government in the form of subsidies on the groundnut price which is the main cash crop in rural areas, the gap between urban and rural income continues to widen. Sustained declines in the groundnut industry brought about by bad weather and uncertainties in its international market value on the one hand, and occasional upward revision of urban wages on the other hand, were partly instrumental in creating the reported disparities in income between the regions. Therefore, despite government assistance in providing a strong financial prop for the groundnut trade in the past, per capita income in rural areas in 1982/83 was about D300-400 in contrast to D1,844 in urban areas, or as much as four and half times higher in the latter region.



In general, gross regional imbalances in incomes seem to be a common feature of many developing countries. In most of these states which share several major characteristics with The Gambia, the top priority usually given to urbanisation schemes, and several socio-economic problems, often affect the success of paid job creation programmes in rural areas. As a case in point, the ILO West African investigation cited before (ILO/JASPA/W/A, op. cit.) and its sister report on East Africa (ILO/JASPA/EA, 1981) noted similar regional disparities in incomes in most of the states covered by the studies. For example, in Ghana, the average agricultural wage in 1973 was 501 Cedis per annum compared to the average non-agricultural wage of 961 Cedis per annum during the same year. Also, in Sierra Leone, between 1974 and 1975 the average income in the towns was about two and a half times that in the rural village. Of Kenya, the report observes: "Higher wage differentials are probably the strongest force compelling students towards higher paid jobs" (ILO/JASPA/EA, 1981: 6).

In The Gambia, apart from wide-ranging regional differences in incomes, several other characteristics seem to be inherent in the main economic activity, peasant farming, which possibly drive rural school leavers away from undertaking farming to earn their livelihoods. Amongst these are the predominant use of manual skills, the seasonal character of tending the chief cash crop, groundnuts, which is usually farmed only between June and August due to its total reliance on rainfall, and the low income derived from selling its yield. These shortcomings, together with the relatively higher urban wages, seem to make society in general be concerned about labour market mechanisms, particularly as they

affect the two types of post-primary leavers. They also tend to help to activate parents' and school leavers' desires to aspire to urban jobs; which in turn raises the demand for secondary high schooling and competition in the CEE. Besides good pay, urban incomes have other key social attractions, e.g. security of tenure, and a number of social benefits available to appointees which make such jobs more precious to school leavers. As explained, one possible reason why rural school leavers might not readily take up farm work as a career was that it was basically a seasonal activity. In comparison, apart from the minority of urban employees who are daily-paid, most jobs in the civil service attract a permanent and pensionable contract, thus affording continuity and security of service to appointees.

The central features of urban incomes described here are also associated with many of the countries included in the two ILO publications mentioned. These features and their impact in raising the demand for better schooling have also been emphasised by several other investigators (e.g. Dore, 1981; Somerset, 1983). Equally, within The Gambian context, the desire by school leavers to secure such jobs seems to intensify the demand in primary schools for better secondary education. The strong disposition of society towards jobs attracting the social amenities cited was noted by the Department of Education some years ago: "Attitudes of parents, pupils and teachers ... [are] for white-collar jobs. ... whatever is done, they will strive for academic excellence" (GG/ED, 1981: 7).

### 1.8.3 Scarcity of Salaried Employment

The final point which seems vital for discussion in this section of the chapter is scarcity of paid jobs in the modern sector. As with most other developing countries, employment in the modern sector is very small compared with the labour force. For instance, in 1975, the modern sector engaged only 8.4% of the labour force, and by 1980, this percentage had increased slightly by 10.8% (GG/EPU, 1982: 10-12). The small size of the modern sector employment in comparison to employment in the rural sector is also reflected in the economies of several developing countries. In this regard, in Tanzania, 7% of the population were in modern sector employment in 1976; in Somalia, the figure was 8% in 1978; and in Zambia, it was slightly up, by 24%, in 1976 (ILO/JASPA/EA, op. cit.). In these countries, including The Gambia, the relative size of the modern sector employment in relation to school leaver population tends to inflate demands for better secondary education as well as increasing the competition in examinations determining entry into the schools.

Furthermore, as Table 1.5 shows, in The Gambia a greater proportion of jobs in the modern sector are provided by the government and its related agencies. These conditions also seem to create problems for the CEE.



Table 1.5: Sectional Contribution of Employment in the Modern Sector

	Actuals/ Estimates	Estimates	Projections
Central Government	9,378	12,550	15,900
Local Government	1,716	450	400
Public Corporations	4,339	7,500	10,000
Private Establishments	4,133	7,700	10,900
Total	19,622	28,200	37,200

Source: Five Year Plan for Economic and Social Development (GG/MEPID, 1981: 93).

The government's significant contribution in job creation during the first ten years of independence has been dictated by its policy of trying to provide employment opportunities for many individuals during post-independence. Thus, in 1975, Central Government's share of jobs was about 50%. One of the ILO investigations cited before indicated that the rapid expansion of jobs provided by the Central Government might either encourage school leavers to believe that it was obligatory for government to provide employment for them or discourage others from looking for jobs elsewhere such as in the informal sector (ILO/JASPA/WA, op. cit.). However, it dropped to 40% in 1980 and in 1985 it was expected to rise by only 43%. These declining trends, likely to raise demands for success in the CEE, were mostly due to resource constraints and to the government policy on job creation which had been redirected towards consolidation rather than expansion since 1980.

The significant contribution made by government institutions in providing the majority of employment in the modern sector appears to be commonplace in many developing countries. In these countries, the practice is often dictated by political as well as social motives. Further evidence on these issues is reported in the ILO publication which synthesises all the eight-country sub-regional studies (ILO/JASPA, 1982: 14). Accordingly, 71.6% of modern sector jobs in Zambia were provided by the government in 1976. Similar figures for Ghana were 75.8% in 1980 and, in Somalia, it was higher at 93.0% in 1978. However, as was the case in The Gambia, it was not possible for the countries concerned to sustain the upward trends in job creation as a result of resource constraints.

Furthermore, as the employment figures also indicate, one of the government agencies, Local Government, might not be able to relieve the Central Government of its huge burden of providing employment for most school leavers because of sharp falls in its share of jobs. These falls are attributable to severe financial problems which seem to have impeded the desired expansion of Local Government establishments and their major employment-creation projects.

Similarly, although the contribution made by parastatals was noticeable between 1975 and 1980, by 1985 however, they were expected to experience consolidation rather than expansion. Thus, even if the rate of job creation in the private sector had been expected to rise steadily into 1985, such increases might not have succeeded in alleviating the government's employment problems because of declining trends in the number of available jobs in

government-related establishments. One possible implication of these problems is that more and more school leavers might be tempted to anticipate jobs being provided in government departments - jobs which, in fact, may not become available.

Certain points may be raised from the preceding discussion which might influence the demand for secondary schooling, and for better success in the CEE. These are the projected falls on jobs provided both by the government and by other agencies. The latter institutions in particular indicate that they may not be able to assist the government in its burden of having to provide jobs for the majority of post-primary leavers.

Similar school leaver employment problems were also reported in some of the studies undertaken on The Gambia (ILO/JASPA, 1977; IBRD, 1980). Both investigations show in particular that primary and secondary technical leavers were more likely to be unemployed than secondary high leavers. The ILO study cited (ILO/JASPA, W/A, op. cit.), on the other hand, tended to be more optimistic about job prospects for all classes of school leavers. This optimism came from underestimating anticipated school outputs into the labour market and to overestimations on the growth of the modern sector for the period 1977 to 1981, which was not realised due to shortcomings in the agricultural enterprises.

Apart from this latter study, most of the evidence seems to suggest job shortages in the modern sector. Employment forecasts reported in the Five Year Plan (1981-86) reiterate similar grim job prospects for school leavers:

... while established staff in the formal sector would ... rise to 7,000 by 1980, the supply of graduates from secondary and higher educational institutions will ... rise to 9,000.



While the demand for daily-rated and casual labour employees will be ... 8,100 by 1985, the supply of primary leavers will increase ... to 11,000.

Consequently:

The market for secondary and post-secondary leavers will be generally slack; it will be increasingly difficult to find paid employment except for those who obtained good results ... or acquired specialised education that is in demand.

(GG/MEPID, 1981: 28)

To sum up, this chapter was concerned with identifying the problem being investigated in this dissertation, namely the CEE, the main objectives formulated to study it, the theoretical background of the investigation, and various characteristics associated with the problem. As observed, the exclusive use of the examination in selecting prospective post-primary pupils, the wider significance of its social outcomes and its alleged effects on primary education were among the principal factors that inspired the conduct of this investigation. The discussions also revealed some of the main characteristics in the school system and in the economy which offered added incentives to the study. These included, for instance, the incidence of lower progression ratios to the second level of education, especially secondary high schools, and the common practice in society to perceive quite differently the significance of pupils' attendance in the two categories of post-primary school.

Furthermore, as the latter part of the chapter shows, there seems to be some justification for such differential perceptions, given that several modern sector employment practices in general

tended to discriminate in favour of secondary high school leavers relative to those from secondary technical. Also, reference was made to such circumstances as regional disparity in incomes, attractions associated with modern sector jobs and their scarcity as possible exacerbators of society's perceptions of these differential evaluations. Over the years, such factors as those cited here seemed to have influenced higher competition in the CEE which might affect people's attitudes towards primary education as well. Having examined the problem within its national context, the next chapter reviews previous studies conducted on examinations, some of which are similar in function to the CEE, in order to assess their effects on education, particularly at the primary level.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

The following review of previous work concentrates on discussing investigations conducted in developing countries. In most of these countries, much pressure is usually exerted on schools by parents and children for success in public examinations (like The Gambian CEE) because satisfactory performance in the examinations seems to be a strong prerequisite for access to scarce and attractive jobs in the modern sectors of the economy. In view of this, section 1 examines some of the previous studies concerning the attitudes of parents and children towards salaried jobs and education. These discussions are followed in section 2 by a review of a number of studies related to the influences of examinations on education. In section 3 some of the main research data on 'orientation' to learning are discussed as an attempt to further survey the impact of examinations and related academic tasks on education. Section 4 will summarise the main results of the review and also examine them with reference to certain assumptions that will be identified later in this chapter and also state their significance to the writer's own study. Due to the scarcity of relevant literature for the areas to be surveyed, and the need to divide the discussions into several sectional themes, few of the studies will be constantly cited.



## 2.2 PERCEPTIONS OF SCHOOLING AND EMPLOYMENT

### 2.2.1 Views of Parents

Evidence concerning anxieties parents often endure as a result of their desire to acquire secondary school places for their children has long been documented. Writing on the problem of grammar school selection in England and Wales, Vernon (1957) has, for instance, enumerated a variety of strategies usually adopted by parents to enhance their children's prospects in the 11+:

The more far-reaching choose their places of residence in areas where grammar school provision is high. Some of them have their children's intelligence tested at 2 to 4 years. Far too many of them are tempted to supplement the school's effort by coaching their children ...

(Vernon, 1957: 55)

These pressures are experienced even more intensely by parents residing in developing countries because of several reasons. In many of these countries, constraints such as an acute shortage of resources needed to provide more employment opportunities and adequate post-primary places, coupled with the strict maintenance of linkages between jobs, qualifications and salary, often motivate parents to accord overriding importance to selection and certification examinations, and in particular those determining access to the few or most coveted secondary schools.

Given these constraints, several investigators (e.g. Dore, 1976; Oxenham, 1984) contend that a) since jobs provided in the modern sectors of the economy in developing countries are scarce and lucratively remunerated, they are commonly desired by parents and

pupils and b) therefore, the main objective most parents tend to have in enrolling their children in school is to try and prepare them for such jobs. A number of studies investigated these assumptions in certain developing countries.

In one of these studies, which was conducted in Mexico, Brooke et al. (1980) interviewed a group of parents selected from rural areas of the country in order to assess their views on education and modern sector employment. Firstly, the parents were asked to indicate what they thought the main purposes of schooling were. Contrary to the author's assumptions, 72.2% of the Mexican parents stated literacy and numeracy and only 18.3% mentioned jobs or credentials.

To investigate the issue further, Brooke asked the parents to explain why they had encouraged their children to stay on in school so as to complete the prescribed course. In reply, only 22% of the parents referred to certificates and jobs. The strong intrinsic orientation to schooling reiterated by the great majority of Mexican parents was further buttressed by their teachers. Asked why Mexican parents send their children to school, 68.0% said the main reason was to enable the children to read and write as against 12.0% and 4.0% respectively who associated school enrolment with parents' desires to secure credentials or jobs for their children.

Next Brooke sought to determine precisely what educational and occupational aspirations parents had for their children. Once again, as indicated by the author, very few parents expressed the desire for their children to have secondary education. Similar results were reflected in their attitudes towards certificates, for

about 66% of the parents had no knowledge of their children's progress in school.

However, despite these modest views about schooling and its outcome, a greater proportion of parents tended to have less confidence in children's natural endowment by attributing success or failure in school mainly in terms of pupils' hard work or lack of it, as revealed by the author. Thus, whereas most of the Mexican parents were less likely to be inclined towards the concrete values associated with school outcome, nevertheless they believed strongly in the efficacy of hard work as a potential factor determining scholastic success.

Thus, whereas their perceptions on school outcomes and jobs might help to curb demands for schooling, on the other hand their criterion for success or failure in school could probably motivate most of them to exert undue pressure on children and eventually schools. But, despite ascribing scholastic success primarily to diligence on the part of the children, according to the study the majority of the parents offered little academic assistance in terms of home tuition, or undertaking school visits to enquire about children's progress. This low level of parental support was due mainly to the fact that most of the parents had no school experience.

On the basis of these results, it appears that a large majority of rural Mexican parents in this sample seemed to have expressed low aspirations towards education and jobs. A number of points may be taken from the study as possible explanations for these results. In Mexico, the parental sample interviewed by Brooks was more physically and culturally isolated from urban areas;



therefore they were less influenced by western culture. In most of these areas, parents in general do not like their children to seek employment in the cities. Instead they provide family occupations for them which are always available. Because of this, the evidence derived from the study that there were no strict laws governing compulsory enrolment in school, the absence of rationing of places at all levels of education and the absence of centralised examinations to determine students' progression in the school systems, most Mexican parents exhibited low aspirations towards education and paid jobs.

Additional evidence on these issues has been reported in a Ghanaian study (Boakye and Oxenham, 1982) which was also undertaken in rural sectors of the country. In an attempt to assess parents' views on salaried jobs, Boakye and Oxenham presented 127 parents with three differently contrived situations:

- 1 - Farmer A invested all his money in educating his son right through university and eventually the boy got a good salaried job.
- 2 - Farmer B invested part of his money to educate his son up to Middle School Leaving Certificate level, and then used the rest of the money to purchase land for the boy to do farming.
- 3 - Farmer C also helped his son up to Middle School Leaving Certificate level, and then used the rest of the money to set up a small business for his son.

They were then required to indicate in their opinions the farmer that had taken the wisest decision. Their choices revealed a marked preference for farming because 73% thought that farmer B, who

provided only Middle School Leaving Certificate for the son to do farming, was the wisest and only 35% and 3% respectively decided to commend farmer A and farmer C. Therefore, it seemed that the attractions associated with securing rare and well-paid jobs in the modern sector were not of primary concern to the majority of these Ghanaian parents. Instead, they believed that primary schooling and self-employment were all that were necessary to secure a good life.

Since the majority of parents in Boakye's study were not attracted by employment in the modern sectors of the economy, the authors sought to investigate the link between their modest job aspirations and expectations towards educational outcomes. Here again most parents seemed to have valued outcomes associated with schooling such as good behaviour, respect for elders, and literacy. These latter findings imply a close fit between employment and educational aspirations of the majority of parents, which were essentially intrinsic.

However, when the authors assessed the educational and occupational aspirations the parents had for their own children, their previously reported intrinsic orientation towards education and jobs was not sustained. For example, 63% expected their own children to go on to secondary education. One such parent explains his choice: "There will be an inconvenience if my child does not stay in school because he will be useless for manual work, neither will he get a good paying clerical job" (Boakye and Oxenham, 1982: 31).

This high response rate in favour of secondary schooling was a clear contradiction of their views on the wise farmer.

Similar contradictions may be gleaned from the job expectations they had for their children. Asked about the kinds of job they wanted their children to get on leaving school, 40% stated paid jobs, 28% opted for own business and 4% stated family business.

Thus, whereas Boakye's respondents had expressed non-instrumental educational and job aspirations originally to a hypothetical situation, when these issues concerned their own children, their views seemed to be more instrumentally-oriented. Further support for this view seems to be provided in their explanations for scholastic success. Like the Mexican respondents, most parents tended to ascribe scholastic success to hard work, a view which is generally associated with an instrumental orientation to schooling.

However, despite strong emphasis on hard work, only about 13.0% provided help at home for their children's school work because the majority had not had any schooling at all. But the interest shown by the majority of those without formal educational experiences in knowing the children's progress in school tends to show that they might have offered such assistance if they could have.

Several issues were indicated in the study that might account for these contradictions. Like the previous study, the availability of local self-employment opportunities and the recognition given to these jobs (in which most of the parents themselves were engaged) perhaps tended to minimise their personal orientation towards urban jobs. On the other hand, according to the authors, their explicit knowledge concerning labour market practices in the modern sector, which seemed to disfavour



individuals without requisite qualifications, children's compulsory attendance at school and the use of centralised examinations in the school system, appeared to have motivated them to show strong educational and job aspirations for their children. It was also evident from the investigation that parents expected part of their sons' income from such jobs to be used to help them finance their own businesses.

Investigations conducted by Dubbeldam et al. (1970) in the Mwanza District, Tanzania, have shed further light on the attitudes of parents towards education and employment. By interview, the authors sampled the views of urban and rural parents on the circumstances that motivated them to send their children to school as well as the job aspirations they had for them on leaving primary school. According to the interview data, half of the rural parents and the majority of their town counterparts reported sending their children to school so that they could a) secure paid jobs later, b) provide livelihoods for themselves and c) support their parents when old.

This job-oriented view was more strongly entertained by town parents than by their rural counterparts because, as has been indicated by the authors, the former had fewer family jobs to give their children if ever they could not secure salaried jobs. On the other hand, some rural parents were reported to have indicated their willingness for their children to work on the family farm land in the event they were unable to get paid jobs. However, like the Mexican inquiry, the study failed to indicate pupils' attitudes towards family jobs, especially those which were manual. Therefore, compared to the previous investigations, most rural and

urban parents in Tanzania have expressed expectations of more concrete outcomes of education than purely educational values. Apart from the lack of attractive localised occupations for children in both regions, the mechanisms of the modern sector labour market and the adoption of centralised examinations in the school, like in Ghana, have brought about higher aspirations with regard to school outcomes.

In contrast to the preceding findings, Sharp et al. (1978) have reported an investigation undertaken in the primary sector in the United Kingdom which appeared to highlight mixed attitudes concerning parents' views on education and employment. This study also interviewed parents to sample their opinions about school outcomes. The authors were able to distinguish two main frames of meaning that parents attributed to schooling outcome. Nearly all the parents gave primary recognition to the importance of their children developing literacy and numeracy skills, which the authors referred to as a 'universal' orientation to education. Subsumed under this universality were a series of sub-universes or specific meanings which individuals attached to schooling outcomes. These were essentially less intrinsic in value.

Thus virtually all parents seemed to attach a global meaning to schooling which was exemplified by the comment: "If she's all right at her reading, writing and arithmetic, then that is what I mean by getting on well". In addition, others emphasised sub-universalistic views, some of which were extrinsically-oriented, for instance: "For me, getting on well means passing examinations if they're to get anywhere in their jobs" (Sharp et al., op. cit.: 203).

The strong emphasis placed on the values of primary education associated with personal development of children expressed by most of the parents in the above study seems to restate the views of Mexican parents. However, while in the United Kingdom they may be regarded as progressive views connected with primary schooling, in Mexico, as explained earlier, extreme isolation from urban culture and availability of indigenous jobs for school leavers were cited as possible reasons for the opinions held by the majority of parents on these issues.

The preceding review mainly examined the opinions expressed by parents on education and employment in relation to their children. In the next section, studies that assessed views held by the children are discussed.

### 2.2.2 Views of Pupils

During the 1960s and early 1970s there was an interest in some developing countries regarding research into pupils' views towards education and employment. It was common for investigators to make a clear distinction between pupils' aspirations and expectations. Using these criteria, pupils' opinions were assessed in terms of whether they were realistic or unrealistic. However, work on DD has suggested that these issues could be better studied in relation to pupils' social and economic milieux (Little, 1978).

Two of the more thorough investigations on DD which assessed pupils' opinions about schooling and jobs were conducted in Mexico (Brooke et al., op. cit.) and in Ghana (Boakye et al., op. cit.). In the Mexican study Brooke first asked 100 rural pupils to



explain why they were coming to school. In response, explanations related to credentials and employment did not feature prominently as three-quarters gave answers which indicated intrinsic outcomes derived from schooling. Additional evidence for this finding was obtained from their replies to the question: "Why do you think school is worthwhile?" Their explanations were typically: "Learning is good"; "It helps to solve problems"; "It helps in communication" (Brooke, op. cit.: 5). On the whole, these results seem to conform to the intrinsic views on education expressed by most Mexican parents.

Similar findings were also reported by Boakye and Oxenham in rural Ghana which involved 112 pupils. As in the previous study, pupils' opinions about education and paid jobs were examined by interviews. The initial task of the study was to find out what pupils had intended to do at the end of the primary course; according to their responses, the majority did not aspire to paid jobs.

The authors then investigated whether their intention for coming to school was mainly for the intrinsic values they thought school could provide. In reply to the question: "What would school be like if there were no diplomas or certificates?", 54% said their parents might withdraw them from school under such circumstances, while 25.5% stated their parents would still keep them in school.

The children themselves seemed less ambitious to pursue credentials. This was further exemplified in their explanations to the question above: "Schools will be places of indiscipline"; "Pupils would not learn seriously"; "Many pupils would be absent

very often" (ibid.: 9). These results tended to counter the views held by parents personally towards the outcomes of schooling but, on the other hand, they appear to tie in with the educational aspirations they had for their children.

These modest expectations towards paid employment and qualifications did not however seem to sustain pupils' views when the researchers examined their perceptions regarding the factors determining success in their examinations. Contrary to their previous views, most of them tended to place the responsibility for success squarely on hard work done by pupils. In one particular area, about 94.7% of children said that hard work was the most important factor in achieving examination success. This view seems to be contrary to their intrinsic notions concerning the values that schooling usually provides. But apart from this, pupils in Mexico and Ghana seemed to be less concerned about the extrinsic outcomes of schooling. Therefore, as was the case with the parental samples in Ghana and Mexico, the majority of rural pupils in the respective countries tended to aspire to the educational values derived from schooling. Apart from the explanations given previously for parents in the two countries, it may be argued that, in their intrinsic expressions, they have have influenced pupils' views on these issues.

Investigations reported by Clignet (1964) in several West African States and Peil (1968) in Ghana corroborated some of these findings. Clignet has analysed several studies which examined secondary and primary pupils' occupational expectations and aspirations in West African States, which included the Ivory Coast, Gabon and Mali. His data on primary schools show that, in the

three countries concerned, only 33, 30 and 38% respectively of pupils expressed higher attitudes towards white-collar jobs, which gives additional evidence of pupils' low preferences for salaried jobs noted in the last discussions.

Peil's study, which also assessed pupils' occupational aspirations, reported similar findings. The results show that pupils had generally very modest views about their job preferences; Peil explained that most of the pupils, and especially those coming from rural backgrounds, were aware that primary schooling ill-equipped them for white-collar jobs. Thus, in the event that they were unable to secure the paid jobs they aspired to, they would return home to work on the farm land. The author attributed their low occupation choices to this realisation.

Such modest views were however not reported by Little (1978) whose data derived from a secondary analysis of the International Institute of Educational Evaluation (IIEA) stage II survey on science, reading comprehension and literature achievement of 14 year olds which was conducted between 1970 and 1973. Part of the report also contains findings related to educational and job expectations expressed by pupils from four developing countries: Chile, India, Iran and Thailand, as well as three developed countries: England, America and Japan.

In order to examine educational expectations, pupils' replies to the question: "After this year, how many years of full-time education do you expect to receive?", were analysed. Their responses show that pupils coming from the developed countries appeared to have expressed lower expectations than their counterparts from the developing countries. In Japan and England



for instance, 31 and 11% respectively of pupils said they anticipated places at the next level of their education. In terms of availability of places, Japan and England could perhaps accommodate 91% and 75% respectively of their pupils in their schools.

Thus in developed countries, the system is adequate to meet children's aspirations. In sharp contrast, expectations expressed by pupils in developing countries were much higher, especially in relation to the number of places that were available in each country. For example, 79, 71, 72, and 54% of pupils in Chile, India, Iran and Thailand wanted to have secondary schooling while accommodation rates for these places in each country were estimated in the study to be 39, 36, 26, and 16% respectively.

These wide differentials in educational expectations were however not reflected in the data concerning their attitudes towards non-manual jobs. When asked about the occupation they were anticipating after completing their schooling, differences in their expectations narrowed as both groups had indicated higher aspirations to non-manual, secure, and well paid employment, although preferences for these jobs appeared relatively higher in developing countries. Between 58 and 85% of pupils in the developed countries wanted non-manual jobs, but in the developing countries the percentages varied from 85 to 97%.

But once again whereas those developing countries' expectations for non-manual work could not be fulfilled because of acute shortages in the number of white collar jobs in the countries concerned, in the developed countries such expectations were likely to be realised. Therefore, contrary to the results which were

reported in Mexico and Ghana, pupils from Chile, Iran, India and Thailand expressed high aspirations towards education and paid jobs. The author attributes higher educational and occupational expectations in developing countries to the screening role of their examination systems, and the close links that usually exist between education and employment in these countries. These discussions conclude our survey of parents' and children's perceptions on education and employment. The following section reviews some of the studies pertaining to the effects of examinations on education.

## 2.3 EFFECTS OF EXAMINATIONS ON SCHOOLS

### 2.3.1 Effects on Advocated Teaching and Learning Methods

In most developing countries where selection or certification examinations operate countrywide, there is a tendency for the professional advancement or community standing of teachers, schools' reputations and pupils' careers to depend on the pass rate derived from such examinations (Dore, op. cit.). Thus pressures arising from parents and pupils and those generated in schools often inspire teachers to concentrate their teaching and learning activities mainly on work pertaining to the examination and therefore to neglect the rest of the syllabus designed by education authorities. This process of learning which was earlier referred to as exam-oriented instruction could have undesirable consequences for recommended teaching and learning processes.

One such effect on learning is the enforcement of individualistic and competitive teaching and learning rather than the pursuit of cooperative attitudes towards education in schools. Although some writers argue that schools are not congenial institutions to enhance the development of cooperative attitudes in children except perhaps in sports (Little, 1975), on the other hand curricula designed for use in certain developing countries often place specific emphasis on cooperative learning especially in areas inhabited by different tribal groupings.

Despite the primary importance given to these types of instruction in schools, a number of studies have indicated the widespread use of teaching and learning geared towards competition in schools. (Brooke et al., op. cit.). For instance the study by Brooke and Oxenham reveals that, despite the emphasis in the Mexican curriculum, class observations and interview data show clearly that teachers were unable to incorporate mutual cooperative teaching styles into their class work. The authors were able to report these distortions despite a) the absence of centralised examinations in the school system to screen pupils for placement in various levels of educational institutions and b) the evidence that teachers' professional careers were not dependent on the academic achievement of their scholars. Most of the teachers who were interviewed and their classes observed were however convinced of the need to preserve certain urban values, one of which was the attempt to enrol pupils in orthodox secondary schools. This conviction seemed to have motivated teachers to give greater attention to internal examinations which screened pupils for placement in these



schools. In general, success in these examinations may depend on inter-individual competition among students.

Similar findings were reported in Ghana by Boakye and Oxenham in their investigation which has been already cited. In Ghana, guidelines on teaching and learning in the middle schools strongly object to the use of teaching devices that are essentially competitive and individualistic. And as in Mexico, the Ghanaian teachers were strongly convinced of the necessity to enhance cooperative learning in schools particularly because "Weaker pupils learn from bright ones"; "Pupils correct themselves"; "Teaching is made easier" (p.10). In spite of such advantages, most of the 13 teachers in this study only paid lip service to its implementation. The failure to develop mutual cooperative education in schools was not because of the high anxiety teachers experienced as a result of the examination; rather it was due to the importance they attached to the examination as a means of providing positive feedback on their teaching. Thus, unlike Mexico, centralised examinations do operate in Ghana; nevertheless pressures from pupils' success in these examinations were not necessary to make teachers distort collaborative teaching practices.

However, despite these distortions, most of the pupils whose views on cooperative learning were assessed by Boakye and colleague seemed to be initiating it amongst themselves in class. For instance, 71.4% of pupils agreed that they discussed their work with friends in class as against 25% who dissented. However, in response to the question "Which is better in class: doing your own work or working in groups?", support for group work declined to 39.4% while 49.1% thought it better for individual pupils to work on

their own. Nevertheless the results seem to show that pupils were likely to welcome group-oriented instruction if this was initiated by teachers.

Several other investigators have sought specifically to examine the use of cooperation and competition in educational settings by focusing their studies on urban and rural children. In particular, investigations conducted by Madsen (1967), Shapira et al. (1969) and Miller et al. (1972) were mainly concerned with these issues. Madsen's study, in which 510 children participated, was held in Mexico; in that of Shapira et al., 80 children from Israel acted as subjects; and Miller et al. conducted their study in Canada with 96 children. In each investigation, children either played games or solved problems using Madsen's Board Game and other tasks. Experimental conditions were structured so that success in these activities depended either on cooperation or competition amongst respective study samples.

Some of the findings that emerged show that rural children were more cooperative than their urban counterparts. These results were explained in terms of the strong emphasis for competition in the urban culture in the countries concerned which was necessary for individuals to secure scarce employment in sharp contrast to the rural culture where cooperation was vital to the economic survival of the family units. Miller particularly indicated that it was common practice for subjects to punish competitive behaviour amongst themselves and, furthermore, the cooperative spirit shown by the children was described by the authors as a 'tug-of-war' strategy which they were unable to dispel even if it was unrewarding.

Another commonly reported impact of examinations on teaching and learning is distortion of the teacher's attention in class. In the United Kingdom, for instance, the Report of the Consultative Committee on Examinations in Secondary Schools (Board of Education, 1911) among other things refers to attempts made by teachers to pay attention to the good pupils in class as one positive effect of examinations. However, most contemporary investigations usually contend that such practices are undesirable and constitute an indication of a higher exam-oriented education (Dore, op. cit.) As stated previously, Dore for instance has revealed that the more teachers' professional careers depend on the academic attainment of their pupils, especially examination pass rate, the greater the degree of exam-oriented teaching and subsequent concentration on those pupils who are likely to do well in examinations. However, data relating to the selective distribution of teachers' attention in class to certain individuals or groups is indeed very limited and does not provide much support for the assertion.

In Mexico (Brooke et al., op. cit.), teachers were reported to have been giving special attention to individuals or to groups of pupils but this was never specifically directed to pupils who were likely to pass the examination. Rather, most teachers seemed to give extra attention for purposes of remediation. These views were supported by the majority of pupils Brooke and Oxenham interviewed in Mexico. One possible explanation for lack of distortions in teacher attention might be the absence of centralised examinations which could have helped to reduce teacher anxiety and therefore enabled them not to focus undue attention on certain pupils when teaching. Thus even if, as stated earlier, teachers valued



internal examinations as a means to help pupils enrol in secondary schools in order to sustain urban values, this desire did not lead to distortions in their attention in class.

Similar results were reported in Ghana (Boakye et al., op. cit.). According to their interview and class observation data, teachers were not giving special attention to clever pupils in class. Instead such additional attention was given to pupils who were dull. As in Mexico, most of the Ghanaian pupils who were interviewed by Boakye and Oxenham confirmed the views expressed by teachers that special attention was only given to pupils who needed remedial help in class. These results seem contrary to the assumption that teachers would distort their own attention in class in order to give special aid to pupils who were performing very satisfactorily. The finding might be explained by reference to the strong emphasis most teachers placed on examination results as a professional feedback rather than for its social outcome as indicated earlier.

Lewin's (1980) Malaysian work provides further evidence concerning the effects of examinations on pedagogy and learning. The author has particularly shown that the pressures associated with the Malaysian Integrated Science Course had inspired teachers to deviate from adopting innovative teaching methods that were recommended for the science programme. As quoted by Lewin, the science curriculum in Malaysia among other things provided that:

The didactic method should be minimised and the heuristic method utilised ... that discovery methods should be used involving pupils in carrying out as many practical works as possible. That the syllabus ... be constructed to examine ... designs of experiments and the ability to solve problem situations. (Lewin, 1980: 2-3)

people who a) live far away from urban areas or tend to have total disregard for urban culture and b) could secure local employment for themselves or their children which is comparable in value to that in urban areas. In fact, under these latter conditions parents may be motivated to send to, or keep their children in, school without having any motives for the latter's social mobility. The 'disease' is therefore not likely to have any serious effects on people or even schools in these areas.

On the other hand, if communities in developing countries rely mainly on jobs in the modern sectors of the economy in order to provide livelihoods for parents and children, they are likely to show great concern for such jobs and qualifications needed in getting them. Under these circumstances, if centralised examinations operate in the schools which initially screen students for places in higher levels of the school system, individuals' anxieties for such examinations might accelerate. Given these circumstances, and if the community standing of schools and teachers' career advancement depend partly on success in examinations, the 'disease' may be entrenched in communities and schools in these countries. As a result, some of the distortions encountered in education in section 5 of this chapter could probably be expected in schools.

Therefore, although some of the key symptoms of the 'disease' may be found in some developing countries, yet the 'disease' could not be said to have had a severe effect in all those countries. This is mainly due to the existence in those countries of several modifying factors which could lessen the full impact of the 'disease'. This view gains further support in a recent paper

related to the 'disease': "the phenomenon of 'diploma disease' may have different effects and implications in different countries with different cultural, economic and social characteristics ..." (Chan, 1987: 3). Based on these ideas and findings, the linear framework of the theory appears to have limited application in developing countries.

In the same vein, research on 'orientation' to learning is often associated with shortcomings which appear to limit the interpretation and wider application of the findings derived from the studies. For example, as noted in several of the studies, particularly those conducted in Sweden, articles and other academic literature were used as instruments for data collection. The use of such devices is fraught with problems, e.g. selection of texts that are comprehensible to subjects; care needed to ensure that the text chosen may not explicitly induce subjects to adopt either a surface or a deep processing approach; the importance of writing clear and precise instructions for subjects and the motivational level of subjects towards the tasks. If care is not taken to attend to these factors, they could all affect the results likely to be obtained from the investigations. This pioneering work is also criticized for the use of very small samples since attempts to generalize the results may be seriously limited.

Other major problems connected with the studies include extreme subjectivity in terms of the collection and analysis of qualitative data and the status of typologies that emerged from the studies. Analysis of data often relied on the selection of criteria deemed relevant to the objectives being investigated. Thus, despite possible disagreements over the identification of such



criteria, there seems to be a danger that the studies might be overburdened by researchers' subjective impressions. Svensonn and Theman (1983) in particular observe that an utterance or a response may have different meanings to different people. In the light of these criticisms, extension of the studies to include other countries such as Britain, enabled the use of such strategies as questionnaires which attract larger samples, multiple methodology and cross-referencing in data analysis to be adopted with a view to reducing these problems.

With regard to the typologies, there seems to be a debate as to whether they may be regarded as steady and consistent labels or merely as contingent descriptive models. However, given individual differences in learning or studying, it appears more sensible to perceive them as falling into the latter category. This view is further supported by Entwistle and Marton (1984) who, among other things, indicate that the student's approach to learning can show both consistency and variability. It is hoped that further refinements of the methods, data collection procedures and analysis could in the future render the findings of this line of inquiry to be more interpretative and generalizable.

To conclude the discussions in this chapter, it appears necessary to describe how the investigations reviewed earlier have influenced in various ways the design and conduct of the study which has provided the main data of this dissertation. The first impact of these studies may be seen in the choice of the topic of the dissertation - the CEE. Apart from being motivated by some of the problems and criticisms connected with the use of this examination (see Chapter 1), the choice of this topic was also inspired by those

findings of the literature review which show the effects of examinations (especially those similar in function to the CEE such as the Kenyan CPE) particularly in developing instrumental attitudes towards schooling and the likely impact of these perceptions on education. Based on a number of similarities between The Gambia and some of the developing countries in which several previous studies were launched, the CEE was selected for study in this dissertation in the belief that some of the main findings obtained in the review might be replicated in The Gambia.

Following the selection of the topic, it became necessary to secure a theoretical framework for the investigation of the specific objectives being examined in this dissertation. As stated earlier (Chapters 1 and 2), constant references to the 'diploma disease' theory in the communities of developing countries, and popular usage in current research of its major conjectures and findings derived from replicating those propositions, led to the adoption of the theory as the main theoretical construct for the dissertation supported by 'orientation' to learning research tradition. Already, various conceptualisations apparent in both theories which seem to have clear implications for most developing countries including the Gambia were outlined in Chapter 1 of this dissertation. Having decided on the background theories, it became expedient to identify the objectives of the dissertation which related both to the two theories and to some of the results of the discussions on economic, social and educational issues in The Gambia (see Chapters 1 and 3). Consequently, the review of previous work has enabled the dissertation to have a theoretical background as well as working objectives and assumptions.

Several of the studies included in the literature review had been conducted in either rural or urban areas, while others are inter-regional studies. In view of the presence in The Gambia of both rural and urban areas, and the similarities as well as differences of views expressed by the urban and rural samples in the literature review, a decision was taken to concentrate the dissertation on investigations in both rural and urban areas in The Gambia. In the light of several major economic, social and educational contrasts between urban and rural areas in The Gambia generally, as revealed in Chapter 1 of this dissertation, and particularly between the two study regions (see Chapter 3), it was expected that an inter-regional study on the effects of the CEE on individuals and on primary schooling would probably produce very illuminating results similar to some of those reported in previous work. Therefore previous research was also instrumental in the selection of a research environment in the writer's own country. This was significant because it helped to relate the writer's training programme to a study of a major educational problem in his country.

Previous research has also influenced the choice of appropriate data collection methods and strategies because, as may be seen in Chapter 3, most of the instruments used in collecting the main data of this dissertation were similar to those reported in the literature review. Furthermore, the selection of items included in the writer's own instruments was highly influenced by previous research findings, especially respondents' diverse views on such issues as modern sector jobs, schooling, examinations and associated topics. Inspired in particular by Brooke's Mexican work, which



among other things studied the opinions of pupils in the terminal classes of primary (where most parents make often vital decisions about pupils' educational and occupational careers), Primary Six (the CEE class) was chosen as one of the main study samples, for the writer's own study. Information concerning these issues, especially the selection of study population, the various methods used in obtaining the main data for this dissertation and the major problems associated with these exercises are discussed in the following chapter.

## CHAPTER 3

### SAMPLE AND METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses various issues related to the methods and procedures used in collecting the main data of this dissertation. In the first section, an attempt is made to describe some of the key differentiating features between the two contrasting regions of the country from where the main data of this dissertation were obtained. These discussions are intended to provide justification for selecting the regions concerned. Next, a number of working assumptions related to the objectives being investigated in this dissertation are outlined. Following this, the design, conduct and results of the pilot work are described. The final section discusses such issues as the sampling procedures adopted for the main study; description and use of the research instruments in the main study; and some of the problems encountered during the data collection exercise.

#### 3.2 DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY REGIONS

##### 3.2.1 Rationale for Choice of Study Regions

For administrative purposes, The Gambia has been divided into six regions. These are Banjul and Kombo Saint Mary, Western

Division, Lower River Division, North Bank Division, MacCarthy Island Division and Upper River Division (see Appendix C).

Following the decentralization of education services in the country in 1976, four Educational Regions were created within the existing administrative areas and designated as Region One, Region Two, Region Three and Region Four. Region One is situated in an urban area and comprises Banjul and Kombo Saint Mary area, while Region Two, a peri-urban area, is located in Western Division. Regions Three and Four, situated in rural areas, consist of Lower River Division and North Bank Division, and MacCarthy Island Division and Upper River Division respectively.

In view of the decision to focus the dissertation on a comparison of two different regions in the country in terms of differences in physical isolation, availability of modern sector jobs, social amenities and school facilities, it became necessary to select regions that are truly representative of an urban culture and a rural culture. Since Region Four is the farthest away from Region One, these two regions were chosen for the study. It was assumed that these two regions were likely to exhibit several of the differences cited above.

Based on the above expected differences, it was further assumed that individuals residing in the two regions might perceive quite differently the social and economic values associated with the CEE and primary education generally. These assumptions influenced the choice of Region One (urban) and Region Four (rural) as areas from where the main data of this dissertation were to be derived. In the ensuing discussions, some of the major areas in which differences were anticipated between the two regions are described.



### 3.2.2 Socio-economic Characteristics

#### 3.2.2.1 Physical and geographical features

Region One has a total land area of 88 km<sup>2</sup> while that of Region Four is 1,619 km<sup>2</sup>, or eighteen times greater than the former region. At the time of collecting the main data of this dissertation, the population of the regions was 47,931 and 552,103 respectively for the urban and rural regions. However, although Region Four has a greater land area and population than Region One, nevertheless the latter region had a population density of 2,194/km<sup>2</sup> compared with 47/km<sup>2</sup> for the former region.

In the main, attractions associated with the urban region, particularly improved social services, concentration of paid jobs, better prospects for apprenticeship training schemes as well as for self-employment, tended in previous years to have inspired rural-to-urban migration of the population. In turn, this trend led to the great disparity in population density between the two regions.

Marked differences in the relative size of land area between the regions have implications for the type of major economic activity undertaken by people in the two regions. Thus, in the rural region where there is no shortage of suitable land, the majority of people are engaged in farming as indicated earlier. On the other hand, in the urban region where acute land shortage is common even for dwelling purposes and much more so for agricultural activities, most of the inhabitants are either in wage or salary employment or are self-employed. It may also be observed later on

in this chapter that marked differences in population density have implications for admission and attendance ratios in the primary schools of the respective regions.

### 3.2.3 Prospects for Modern Sector Employment

In Chapter 1 of this dissertation one of the topics discussed was the major economic activity in urban and rural areas of the country. In line with our assumption on employment opportunities in Regions One and Four, this subsection explores the prospects for modern sector employment in the respective regions with reference to the following data in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Distribution of Modern Sector Employees in Urban and Rural Regions for the Period 1976-1979

Area	1976	1977	1979
	%	%	%
Region one (urban)	76.0	75.2	73.3
Region four (rural)	11.3	12.2	13.0

Source: Quarterly Survey of Employment and Earnings, First Quarter, Ministry of Economic Planning and Industrial Development, Gambia Government, 1979, p.13.

Due mainly to the scarcity of reliable employment data after 1979, figures for recent years were not available. However, for the period under review (even although Region One's share of jobs progressively decreased slightly while that of Region Four took the opposite trend), there were disproportionate disparities between

the jobs available in the regions. The categories of jobs quoted in the above-named survey were mainly those of the civil service, manufacturing, tourism, fishery, electricity and catering services. This pattern of job concentration in urban areas as opposed to the rural areas was also reported in Swaziland (Smith, 1980) and in Guinea Bissau (Carr-Hill et al., 1982), and is also common in the majority of developing countries in sub-Saharan Africa.

### 3.2.4 Provision of Educational Facilities

#### 3.2.4.1 Education before independence

Reliable data on school expansion in Regions One and Four before independence are indeed fragmented. Nevertheless, there is evidence to suggest that the alleged urban-rural disparity in education in favour of the former region was in effect implanted during the colonial era. This imbalance in the development of education in the country was mainly attributed to the concentration in urban areas of various missionaries who were instrumental in the establishment of western educational institutions in the country.

Thus from 1820, when the Methodist Mission built pioneering schools in The Gambia, up to 1945, the development of education took place almost entirely in the urban area. Consequently, by 1945, out of a total primary school population of 2,788, less than 400 pupils were in rural areas. Again, between 1950 and 1960, the urban area was provided with about half a dozen infant schools and over a dozen primary schools, in comparison to about 30 primary schools in the whole of the peri-urban and rural areas. With regard to post-primary schools, by 1947 the three high schools



existing in the country were all situated in the urban area. And between 1958 and 1963, two secondary modern schools were built in the urban area compared to one (built in 1947) in the whole rural area. From these pieces of isolated data, it is clear that during the time of pre-independence, Region One had more educational provision than Region Four. This trend seems to have continued after independence as the following discussion will highlight (GG/ED, 1976; GG/ED, 1980).

#### **3.2.4.2 Education after independence**

In Chapter 1 a review of school expansion at the national level was presented. We shall now concentrate on a similar exercise for Regions One and Four respectively in terms of number of schools and school enrolment for the period 1965 to 1983.

Table 3.2 shows that during the period in question, Region Four had a greater number of primary schools than Region 1 but this situation was reversed at the post-primary level. Nevertheless, at both levels, Region One had a larger student population compared to Region Four.

Consequent upon these growth trends, the average annual growth rates at primary for the same period were 22% for Region Four and 14% for Region One. Similar figures for the secondary technical were 9.8 and 8.5% respectively. This picture was in the obverse at the secondary high level. As a result, the average annual growth rates at this level were 9.6 and 2.6% respectively for Regions One and Four during the period under review.

Table 3.2: Comparison of School Expansion in the Urban and Rural Regions of Study by Level of Education from 1965 to 1983

Level	YEAR				
	1965	1970	1975	1980	1983
<u>PRIMARY</u>					
<u>Region 1</u>					
Schools	15	17	19	18	21
Pupils	5,065	6,582	9,948	10,869	14,453
<u>Region 4</u>					
Schools	21	21	19	42	50
Pupils	2,123	2,721	3,287	7,147	10,430
<u>SECONDARY TECHNICAL</u>					
<u>Region 1</u>					
Schools	6	6	6	5	5
Students	1,795	2,179	2,438	2,825	3,453
<u>Region 4</u>					
Schools	2	3	3	3	3
Students	74	305	460	449	787
<u>SECONDARY HIGH</u>					
<u>Region 1</u>					
Schools	3	3	4	5	5
Students	791	1,007	1,224	2,457	3,324
<u>Region 4</u>					
Schools	1	1	1	1	1
Students	301	435	367	375	371

Sources: 1. Working Papers, Ministry of Economic Planning, Gambia Government, 1980, p.31.

2. Educational Statistics (1983-1984), Ministry and Department of Education, Gambia Government, 1983, pp.11-21.

These growth rates, especially at primary school level, which tended to favour Region Four, illustrate the successful implementation of government strategies on increasing school expansion in this region. However, they do not seem to indicate that Region Four had more school facilities than Region One. One evidence of this view seems to be that in 1975, 1980 and 1983, Region One had enrolled 78, 76 and 93% of its primary school age cohort (8-14 years), while in Region Four the corresponding figures were 10.4, 20.3 and 27.2% respectively. Equally, at the time this study was being done, the admission ratios (8 year olds) in Regions One and Four were 77 and 38% respectively.

Therefore, during pre- and post-independence, the development of both primary and post-primary education tended to favour Region One more than Region Four. These regional disparities in education have emerged in other developing countries. For instance, Martin (1976) has in particular indicated that in the North, East and West of Cameroon, which were regarded as rural areas, there were relatively fewer primary and secondary school enrolments compared to the Central-Southern and the West-Coast which lie in urban areas. Likewise, the study undertaken in Guinea Bissau and cited earlier (Carr-Hill et al., op. cit.) also reveals a heavy concentration of educational institutions (at all levels) in the capital, Bissau, and in the major cities, while the rural villages were least provided with these facilities. In the following section, further evidence concerning disparities in education between Regions One and Four will be examined.



### 3.2.5 Comparison of Enrolments at Post-Primary

In Chapter 1 the problem of transition to post-primary in the whole country was discussed. In this section, transition to post-primary in the two study regions during a number of selected periods is described in the light of the ensuing data in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3: Comparison of Previous Performances of the Urban and Rural Regions of Study in the CEE between 1979 and 1983

Year	Urban	Rural
1979/80 (5672 candidates)		
No. of candidates	2517	769
High School places	283	96
Secondary technical places	758	24
1980/81 (5793 candidates)		
No. of candidates	2644	847
High school places	304	79
Secondary school places	873	248
1981/82 (Data on regional distributions of CEE results unavailable.)		
1982/83 (7735 candidates)		
No. of candidates	2884	1232
High school places	368	100
Secondary technical places	862	279

- Sources:
1. Annual Report and Statistics (1979-80), Department of Education, Gambia Government, p.110.
  2. The Gambia Common Entrance Examination Results (1980-81) WAEC, Banjul Office, p.1.
  3. Educational Statistics (1982-83), Ministry and Department of Education, Gambia Government, p.88.

It may be noted from the preceding CEE data that, in relation to presentations for the examination and access to post-primary schools, the urban area seemed to be more advantaged than the rural area. Therefore, throughout the period surveyed, urban primary schools had enrolled a greater number of the CEE candidates to post-primary schools, especially desired secondary high, than schools in the rural area. These disparities occurred despite the evidence in the preceding data which show that the rural area had more than twice the number of primary schools than the urban area.

While the reported disparity in presentations for the examination might be due to differences in enrolment ratios between the regions, factors such as differences in socio-economic background, school resources and the amount and quality of teachers in the respective regions might have significantly influenced variations in performance in the examination during the period concerned. As regards socio-economic status, certain previous studies have revealed that circumstances like income, parental education and attitudes towards schooling, material resources at home, health and nutrition (which appear to be more favourable in urban than in rural areas) are vital in determining scholastic achievements in school (Lavin, 1965; Davie, 1979). Therefore, despite the research findings reported by Heyneman and colleagues in Uganda (1976), which among other things suggest that socio-economic status has less impact on school achievement in developing countries compared to developed countries, it seems plausible to assume that lack of some of these essential characteristics in the rural environment could have had an impact on their less satisfactory performances in the CEE compared to urban schools.

In addition, stark differences in the availability of essential school resources, especially permanent buildings, furniture, textbooks and other consumable items, might have resulted in the differential performances of the two regions in the CEE. For instance, although Region One had 308 classes in contrast to 330 for Region Four, nevertheless when this study was being conducted, Region One had 231 permanent classrooms compared to 155 in Region Four. Consequently, whereas in Region One there were 77 non-permanent classrooms, the number of such classes in Region Four was greater at 162. Moreover, there were greater proportions of permanent chairs and desks in Region One schools than there were in schools in Region Four (GG/ED, 1981: 50). It was also observed by the writer that about 16 classes in Regional Four schools had no permanent classrooms, and therefore classes were held outside under the trees. These problems could well have affected both the organisation and quality of instruction in rural schools to the extent that children's performances in the CEE also would have been affected. The influence of the availability of school resources in creating differential levels of achievement in Uganda was noted earlier (Heyneman, 1980).

A similar disparity in provision was also observed in the number and professional status of the teachers posted in the respective regions at the time this study was being done. In the rural area, for instance, there were 50 primary schools compared to 21 in the urban area. Nevertheless there were 449 teachers in urban schools as opposed to 394 teachers in the rural schools and, in addition, while the rural schools had only 93 qualified teachers, those in the urban areas had 226. Altogether these differences



tend to be important for the relative advantage the urban schools had over their rural counterparts in enrolling more children in post-primary schools between 1979 and 1983 (GG/ED, op. cit.). The likely impact of the preceding differences between the two regions on attitudes towards the CEE and primary schooling in general will be investigated later in the dissertation.

### 3.3 WORKING ASSUMPTIONS

The discussions contained in chapters 1 and 2 and in the preceding section of this chapter enabled a number of working assumptions to be formulated. These assumptions are related to the CEE, the respondent groups (which will be described later in this chapter) and to the two study regions.

With regard to the CEE, it was anticipated that such factors as perceptions on its social and economic outcomes; primary leaver employment problems; lower crossover rates to desired secondary schools; and qualitative differences between post-primary schools might all help to intensify the respondent groups' desires for success in it. In view of these circumstances, and given that direct access to both prestigious secondary schools and lucrative jobs in the modern sectors of the economy depend on a prior success in the examination, and based on a number of key findings identified from the literature review (see Chapter 2), it was assumed:

That most of the respondents would probably perceive success in the CEE more importantly than the knowledge, skills and attitudes associated with attendance in the primary school. Consequently, they would possibly give

more attention to the CEE preparations than to pursuing the primary school syllabus.

In the case of parents, it was argued that the main purpose for them in sending their children to school might be to help the latter qualify for entry into post-primary rather than for the knowledge likely to be derived from the completion of the prescribed primary course.

Largely because of the correspondence between an outstanding success in the CEE, access to popular secondary high school and the likelihood of getting paid jobs in future, it was assumed that Primary Six and Form One pupils might possibly perceive attendance in primary school more as a preparatory period for the CEE rather than for following the recommended primary course.

Concerning teachers, it was contended that a high CEE pass rate was vital for enhancing respectively their image in society, their careers, and those of the children. Therefore, it was further suggested that preparations for the examination rather than those related to the official primary syllabus would determine what they taught in school daily.

For primary heads, it was anticipated that they might perceive a high CEE pass rate as being important in determining their schools' and teachers' image in society, and also for the career advancement of their teachers and pupils. Therefore, it was further argued that they would presumably give more attention and support to work pertaining to the examination than to that of the advocated primary syllabus.

Based on the preceding, it was again assumed that the perceptions and practices likely to obtain from all the respondent

groups might affect a) recommended or desired teaching and learning methods at upper primary and b) the satisfactory or recommended coverage of the upper primary school subjects as detailed in Chapter 1 of this dissertation.

And finally, in line with the inter-regional investigatory focus of the dissertation, it became necessary to provide a working assumption concerning the possible perceptions of the respondent groups on such key issues as job prospects for primary leavers, the CEE, primary schooling generally, and on the likely effects of their views on the process and content of upper primary school syllabus in the two regions. It may be recalled from Chapter 1 and section 1 of this chapter that the rural area is physically and socially isolated from the urban area. Also the majority of jobs in the rural sector are in the self-employment categories, whereas the majority of those in the urban sector attract salaries. Similarly, given these differences in economic activities in the regions, parents in the rural area are less likely than their urban counterparts to be able to maintain their children in post-primary schools, especially secondary high where the fees and other bills are relatively higher than those in secondary technical schools. In the light of these circumstances, coupled with some of the main findings of the literature review in Chapter 2 which indicated low levels of aspirations to paid employment and school outcomes in rural areas, it was anticipated:

That urban respondent groups are more likely to express despair for primary leaver employment problems, and therefore to express more instrumental attitudes towards the CEE and primary school outcomes than rural respondent groups. Consequently, the likely influences of the examination on the process and content of upper primary education might be greater in the urban area than in the rural area.



### 3.4 DEFINITION OF KEY CONCEPTS

In presenting the main findings of the study in the following chapters, constant references will be made to such concepts as examination orientation, instrumental and non-instrumental orientation, and distortions in teaching and learning respectively. It is therefore necessary to provide precise indicators for the presence or otherwise of attitudes associated with each.

Firstly, in situations indicative of examination orientation, it is assumed that respondent groups might express much pessimism about primary leavers' employment problems. This pessimism was believed to have encouraged most respondent groups to show more concern for concrete outcomes associated with the CEE than knowledge associated with the upper primary curriculum. Consequently, they might give more support to preparations for the examination than those related to the primary curriculum. Furthermore, the nature of assistance provided for the CEE would probably be related to their conceptions of success in the examination.

In the course of our subsequent discussions, especially in Chapters 4 and 5, respondent groups whose views approximate to concrete outcomes related either to the CEE or primary schooling will be referred to as being instrumentally-oriented. By contrast, those whose views indicate knowledge-related issues or educational benefits connected either with the CEE or upper primary schooling in general will be referred to as being non-instrumentally-oriented.

Distortions in pedagogy and learning processes would on the other hand be said to exist where teachers and pupils fail to adopt those teaching and learning methods advocated for use in the upper primary curriculum. As the discussions in Chapter 5 hope to show, these methods in particular stress the development of cooperation, comprehension, problem-solving, enquiry and creativity in teaching and learning in primary schools.

Also, distortions of the upper primary curriculum would be said to exist in situations where parts of the prescribed subjects were discarded in teaching and learning in preference to the CEE work. Information about recommended primary school subjects will be given in Chapter 5 while that of the CEE subjects will be found in Appendix O).

### 3.5 THE MAIN INVESTIGATION

This section begins by describing the original sample proposals, objectives and plans for data analysis, all of which were either not achieved or carried out mainly because of a number of problems experienced by the writer during the fieldwork research. These problems and their impact on the dissertation will be discussed before describing the research instruments and detailed data collection methods and processes.

### 3.5.1 Original Sample Proposals

The selection of samples for the main study was guided by the differences cited before between the two study regions. On the basis of those differences, a number of target groups closely associated with the CEE in Region One and Region Four were proposed in the original research proposal. These groups consisted of the following:

- A) Parents whose children were in the CEE classes
- B) Primary Six (the CEE class)
- C) Primary five (the pre-CEE class)
- D) Form One pupils of high schools (the post-CEE class)
- E) The CEE teachers
- F) Heads of primary schools
- G) Educational administrators

As regards the CEE sample, during the session this study was carried out, there were 3,101 pupils in the CEE classes in the two study regions. In order to have a fairly representative sample, the original plan was to include one-fifth of this total, or about 600 pupils (300 pupils from each region). It was also intended to include 50 students respectively in each region from pre-CEE classes, Form One classes of secondary high schools respectively. There were no plans to have Form One students from secondary technical schools because a common practice in these schools is to allow many of these students to resit the CEE. For adults, the target sample sizes were 20 parents, 20 CEE teachers, 20 heads of primary schools from each region respectively and 6 educational administrators.



The CEE sample was regarded as the primary target group for the study because its members were being prepared for the examination. Furthermore, as stated earlier, it is at this stage in the primary school that many of the parents are likely to make vital decisions about pupils' futures. Their juniors, or pre-CEE sample, were included in the study so as to find out empirically whether the alleged effects of the CEE might permeate classes other than Primary Six. Since Form One students had already experienced the CEE, it was anticipated that their views would make fascinating contrasts when compared with those of the CEE pupils. On the other hand, parents, the CEE teachers and heads of primary schools were considered important because of the great supportive guidance and preparatory roles they normally play in respect of the examination. And finally, a few educational administrators were included in the hope that their responses would be used when discussing the policy implications of the dissertation. However, as will be explained later, most of these initial sample proposals could not be achieved.

The foregoing sampling proposals were based on the proposed investigations related to the original objectives which were formulated prior to collecting the main data of this dissertation.

### 3.5.2 Original Objectives

Inspired by research paradigms like DD and 'orientations' to studies, the original objectives of the study were to investigate: a) the development of examination orientation with regard to the CEE; b) the likely distortions of such examination-oriented schooling on recommended teaching-learning

processes; and c) how the adoption of exam-oriented instruction might affect the desired coverage of the prescribed primary school curriculum. These objectives were formulated with a view to establishing definitive causal relationships. In this regard, respondent groups' orientation or attitudes to and experiences of such issues as employment prospects for primary leavers, the CEE and primary education were to be related to their suggested strategies or approaches to teaching and learning at upper primary, which in turn would be related to learning outcomes. The main data of this dissertation were to have been analysed in accordance with the study of these linkages. It would therefore have been possible to study the above-named objectives and to eventually make plausible inferences from the data. However, because of a number of problems to be referred to in the following section, the main data of this dissertation could not provide the needed empirical evidence in respect of the above objectives. Consequently, this dissertation can more appropriately be described as an essentially attitudinal and exploratory type of study. Thus, rather than testing hypotheses to study causal relationships, the study will be concerned mainly with shedding further illumination on, or insights into, the key issues that are being investigated.

### 3.5.3 Major Constraints of the Study

One of these constraints related to lack of adequate finances needed for data collection in the field. With the exception of modest monetary assistance provided by the investigator's sponsoring agency, all other major expenses incurred

in this trip, in particular the cost of travelling to and from The Gambia, were borne by the investigator. Due to the scarcity of funds, it was indeed difficult to reach many remote parts of the rural region for the purpose of contacting those who were to participate in the study. These problems resulted in delays or cancellations of some of the planned programmes of data collection and thus seriously affected the data collection exercise.

The problems were compounded by strict limitations on the time that was available to conduct data collection. Since this period was limited to two months, in accordance with the provisions of the investigator's scholarship award, and because follow-up visits to The Gambia that might be necessary to collect additional data, were impossible because of monetary problems, there was very limited time available in which to obtain the main data of the dissertation as well as additional sources of primary data.

Furthermore, since other vital exercises such as making preliminary arrangements in government establishments and in schools and pilot work were to be done before the main data collection exercise began, it was impossible to secure the required number of respondents in all the samples.

Another major constraint was the absence of a conducive research climate as far as the observation of classroom activities in Primary Six classes in the two regions of study was concerned. For example, one source of data scheduled for collection in primary schools was that of classroom observation on teaching and learning. This information was needed to provide further insights into possible effects of the CEE on the process of upper primary education as well as its content. However, it was not possible to obtain these data because in most Primary Six or CEE classes,



lessons tended to be more of practice sessions for the examination than active teaching and learning activities.

In view of the impact of the preceding problems on the main data collection exercise, the sampling proposals outlined earlier could not be adopted. Instead, as Table 3.4 shows, a relatively smaller study population, characterized by sharp disparities between the regional groups, was eventually obtained.

Table 3.4: Sample Distributions for the Main Investigation

Category	Total	Urban	Rural	Age Range
CEE candidates	359	235	124	12-14
Form One pupils	255	211	44	13-15
Primary school heads	15	8	7	34-48
CEE teachers	18	10	8	26-46
Parents	20	10	10	21-50
School administrators	3	-	-	38-45
Totals	670	474	193	

Form One sample exhibits the highest level of disparity amongst all the regional samples. As noted earlier, at the time of launching this investigation, there was only one secondary high school in the rural region of study whereas as its urban counterpart had five secondary high schools. In what follows, the methods and procedures used in choosing the main samples cited in Table 3.4 will be described.

#### 3.5.4 The Methods Adopted in Choosing the Main Samples

The two study regions were selected using the criteria discussed earlier in this chapter. As the population of schools and these regions varied on a number of characteristics, a purposive stratified sampling procedure was adopted in selecting the samples, first selecting schools, then selecting children within schools. Primary schools in each region were, as far as possible, selected randomly using the following criteria: a) government - private; b) small - big; c) boy - girl; d) high CEE pass rate - low CEE pass rate; to avoid obvious unrepresentativeness.

Using individual class lists for each school concerned, and with the assistance of class teachers, random procedures were used to select 235 pupils from eight urban schools and 124 pupils from seven rural schools. However, as a result of wide differences between regional schools on some of the characteristics mentioned, it was impossible to control all the variables in the regional samples. Thus, rural schools had a lower proportion of girls, reflecting lower girl participation rates. Similarly, the rural sample necessarily contained fewer children attending primary schools, and its schools tended to achieve a lower CEE pass rate as shown earlier on.

Similar strategies were adopted to sample Form One pupils from six of the secondary high schools situated in the two regions. Given that the total number of schools involved was small, it was possible to obtain data from each school. On the basis of their class lists, schools were first categorised into the two major regions, urban and rural. Since there was only one rural high

school in the study population, and because some of the pupils who were in urban schools had a rural background, pupils were further grouped according to their birth places. This strategy was meant to augment the proportion of rural representation in the sample. Following this, a random sample of 255 was selected from six secondary high schools respectively, 211 from Region One and 44 from Region Four (N = 255).

As with pupils, selection of adult samples was preceded by selecting schools on a regional basis. Heads and teachers were then chosen in relation to the following differentials: a) age-range; b) academic background; c) professional status; and d) experience. It was however impossible to select heads and teachers on the basis of sex as there were relatively fewer female staff in rural schools in comparison to urban ones. By adopting random procedures, eight primary school heads were selected from Region One, and seven from Region Four (N = 18).

As regards the parents, the following criteria were adopted to select urban and rural samples: a) region; b) education; c) age-range; and d) sex. Based on the above, ten parents were selected respectively from urban and rural sectors (N = 20). The parental sample comprised those respondents whose children or wards were being prepared for CEE.

Finally, in choosing the sample for educational administrators, it was necessary to include senior staff who were responsible for executing duties and responsibilities such as the overall administration of the national school system, the design of primary curriculum, and the design and conduct of the CEE. The sample thus consisted of: a) The Assistant Director of Education



in-charge of educational services; b) The Director, Curriculum Development Unit; and c) The Senior Assistant Registrar, WAEC, Banjul Office (N = 3).

Further information concerning the groups' personal characteristics may be gleaned from Appendix C. According to these data, half the number of parents, especially those in the rural sample, were self-employed. Also, a fairly high number were engaged on salary or wage employment and most of these were in the urban sample. On educational attainments, half were unschooled while a little over a quarter (almost all urban respondents) attended a secondary technical school in comparison to just three who had post-high school education. The latter were also in the urban sample. For heads, the majority had attended a secondary high school and for this there were no noticeable regional differences. Of the rest, three (one urban and two rural) had gone to a secondary technical school and one urban respondent had had a post-secondary high schooling. Apart from four who had undergone additional professional training abroad, the remaining number, who were mostly rural respondents were locally trained. Of those trained abroad, all were in the urban sample. Their experiences as school administrators varied greatly although the majority had administered schools for between 5 and 14 years.

Amongst teachers, half the number had a secondary high school education while about the same number had attended a secondary technical school. These attendances did not reveal any real regional differences, although in contrast to heads, these were mostly urban teachers. Likewise, a small number consisting mostly of rural teachers were unqualified teachers (UQT). Like heads,

their experiences show wide variations, but most of them had taught for between 10 and 18 years.

In the Form One sample, a large majority of parents, mostly in the urban area, had gone to a secondary technical school. In contrast, in the Primary Six sample, many of whom were rural parents, just over half had had no school experience. In both samples, parents were engaged on a wide variety of jobs, although 25% and 34% respectively of Form One and Primary Six parents were pursuing manual work.

### 3.6 DESCRIPTION OF RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

In this study, the key sources of data were: a) An Attitude Questionnaire; b) Learning and Study-Skills Questionnaire; c) A Sentence-Completion test; d) Essay; and e) Interviews. A brief description of each device with the exception of the essay test will be given before explaining the procedures and processes used in collecting the main data of this dissertation. Due largely to the triangulated focus of the study, which will be explained later in this chapter, the objectives exemplified in most of the devices, all of which were designed by the investigator, are similar.

### 3.6.1 Attitude Questionnaire

This inventory (see Appendix D) was divided into three main parts. The first part sought information on pupils' biodata while part two consisted of general instructions. In part three, a list of 11 pre-coded questions were given, most of which had prompts or subsidiary questions. These items were mainly check-lists, multiple-choice questions, dichotomies, single-word answers and short descriptive answers.

### 3.6.2 Learning and Study-Skills Questionnaire

The first section of this test (see Appendix E) contained a general instruction explaining how pupils were to record their answers to items. It had four pre-coded items which were scaled with three values such as "Yes, Not certain, No; Always, Sometimes, Never; and All, Some, None".

### 3.6.3 Sentence-Completion Tests

For each of the two sentence-completion tests (see Appendix F), a general instruction was provided at the top briefly describing the procedure pupils were to adopt for the exercise. Following this, a list of incomplete sentences was given. The test designed for Primary Six sample had 11 items whereas the one for Form One sample had 17 items.



#### 3.6.4 Interview Schedules

The schedules used in interviewing parents, primary heads and teachers were similar in their format and content (see Appendices, G, H and I). Each was divided into a section on respondents' biodata, followed by a set of questions, most of which had supplementary questions and prompts. The schedule used in interviewing parents contained eight questions, and those for heads and teachers had 12 and 22 questions respectively.

#### 3.7 A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF THE RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

A number of advantages associated with the measuring instruments necessitated their use in collecting the main data of this dissertation. For instance, one positive effect of using a questionnaire with pupils was that it enabled a fairly large proportion of respondents to participate in the study. Also, since the number of adults who were to be contacted were relatively smaller than those of pupils, it was deemed expedient to use interviews for the latter. These methods were used along with others such as sentence-completion and essay tests. Like the interviews, the use of sentence-completion and essay tests resulted in more extensive probings into pupils' attitudes and experiences about the issues that were investigated.

Against these advantages, a number of problems are associated with the use of these instruments. As regards

questionnaires, circumstances likely to affect findings derived from them include, for example, errors in sampling and design (Hoinville and Jowell, 1978) and various characteristics of respondents such as their ability to retrieve required information and the possibility that they might attempt unduly to please the researcher (Sudman et al., 1974).

Interview data may also be affected by faults arising from the design of the interview schedules (Cohen and Manion, 1980) and several characteristics related to respondents, for instance their rapport with the interviewer, and those of the interviewer himself, in particular the tendency for him to project his opinions or personality into the conversation (Cannell et al., 1968; Borg, 1983). Other common problems inherent in administering devices such as interviews concern analysis and interpretation of qualitative data. It is often argued that such findings are impressionistic, subjective, and thus less amenable to wider objective interpretation and generalisation beyond their sources.

For the essay and sentence-completion tests, selection of items or topics that could effectively sample the objectives being studied, and for such items to be appropriate to the respondents' vocabulary, seem to be major problems concerning their use in research. Furthermore, like interviews, the analysis and interpretation of data derived from these sources often present problems. As with their design and data collection, most of the analyses of findings obtained from sentence-completion and essay items are done by researchers. They have to determine global themes emerging from their data as well as various response categories. This study attempted to reduce some of the biases

likely to arise from such subjective influences by organising constant meetings with the research supervisors during which procedures to be adopted in analysing different sets of qualitative data and samples of analysed data were presented for discussions and comments.

The preceding shortcomings represent sources of limitation as far as the validity, reliability and scope for making widely plausible inferences from the data are concerned. These problems are more certain to emerge from studies relying solely on a single methodology. Partly as an attempt to circumvent some of these problems, this study adopted a multiple methodological approach.

The application of this research paradigm is recommended on the grounds that, when a single method is used as a measuring device, the investigation becomes restricted and therefore the scope for generalising its findings is limited (Denzin, 1970; Green and Wallat, 1981; Hammer, Smith and Atkinson, 1983). Thus in order to ameliorate methodological restrictions, the adoption of a multiple-method of data collection for the purposes of studying a single problem or phenomenon is advocated. This could possibly lead to cross-validation of various data sets and thus help to highlight some biasing effects.

### 3.8 PILOT TESTS

Prior to embarking on collecting the main data of this dissertation, a series of preliminary investigations was conducted aimed at refining the measuring procedures. These trial tests and



interviews were administered in selected primary and secondary high schools and communities in The Gambia in September, 1982.

In choosing the samples, groups were selected whose characteristics were similar to those who would be chosen for the main data collection exercise. Given that the main data were scheduled to be obtained from urban and rural areas, three samples comprising heads of primary schools, teachers, parents and pupils were also drawn from these areas (N = 29).

Overall, the preliminary studies, both in primary and secondary schools were successful. In both samples, pupils were able to cope well with most of the items. The only items that seemed to be problematic to pupils were those they were asked to rank-order. However, since this format seemed to be simpler than asking pupils at this level of schooling to define abstract concepts, for example, the function of a primary school, and given that over 80% coped well with the items, it was decided to retain them. Based on these successful outcomes, only a few major changes were made in rewriting the items, and in providing some more prompts or supplementary questions. The data derived from the investigations were used in working out plans for the analysis of the main data which are described in Chapters 4 and 5 of this dissertation.

As with testing in schools, the pilot interviews were in the main successful. The majority of the interviewees had experienced few problems in responding to the questions. However, experiences gained from the trial sessions necessitated a few changes, additions and deletions of some of the items. In addition, they revealed the need to adopt local language

interpreters for respondents without school experience in the main interviewing sessions so as to curtail the duration of conversations and to give a better structure to the exercise. Furthermore, like school tests, the main findings that derived from the interviews were used in determining ways of analysing the data.

### 3.9 COLLECTION OF MAIN DATA

#### 3.9.1 Testing in Primary Schools

As the previous description of the research instruments indicated, three different types of test instruments were administered to the primary school sample of CEE pupils. These tests were as follows: a) an attitude questionnaire; b) learning and study-skills; and c) a sentence-completion test. In all the schools, pupils were tested in their own classrooms by the investigator with the assistance of class teachers. The tests were given to them in the order presented above. The main procedures adopted in conducting the tests, which were basically similar for the various samples in all the schools, are now described.

#### 3.9.2 Test 1: Attitude Questionnaire

Altogether 359 pupils were tested in 15 schools: 235 from urban schools and 124 from rural schools. They were all CEE candidates aged between 12 and 14 years.

Initially, the investigator explained to the pupils all the main procedures required for doing the test. Following this, the class teacher read out all the items very slowly to enable typing errors and omissions to be sorted out. Then the investigator took a few minutes to explain those sections that pupils did not quite comprehend since English was not their native language. He then informed pupils that they should try to provide answers to all the questions.

In completing the questionnaire, pupils first read the instruction which was written at the top of the first page of the questionnaire. Pupils then provided the required data on the questionnaires which consisted mainly of their own personal characteristics and those related to their parents. Following this, they read the rest of the instructions, and then began giving their responses to the items. Altogether the pupils spent one hour fifty minutes on the test.

### **3.9.3    Test 11: Learning and Study-Skills Questionnaire**

This test was given to the same group of pupils who did the attitude inventory. The procedures adopted in administering it were very similar to those referred to in the previous section. It was however easier to do compared to the previous ones, and thus it took only one hour to administer.



#### 3.9.4 Test 111: Sentence-Completion Test

This was the final test given to the Primary Six sample. Procedures similar to those used for previous tests had been applied in conducting this test. However, unlike the previous ones, the pupils had to complete the incomplete sentences using their own words. They were able to complete it after working on it for one hour and fifty-five minutes.

#### 3.9.5 Testing in Secondary High Schools

Tests administered to the sample drawn from secondary high schools were: 1) essay writing and 2) sentence-completion test.

#### 3.9.6 Test 1: Essay Writing

As pupils in this sample had already experienced the strains and stresses usually associated with preparing for CEE, they were asked to write essays on their experiences about the examination. Altogether 255 pupils wrote essays, of which 211 and 44 were drawn from urban and rural secondary high schools respectively, and their ages ranged from 13-15 years.

The title for the essay was "How I prepared for CEE". In order to provide a coherent structure for the class discussions that preceded writing sessions as well as for pupils' essays, the investigator prepared in advance a list consisting of central themes related to preparations for the CEE which formed the basis of class discussions. These topics included: 1) private study classes and

their importance; 2) type of teaching and learning used in the CEE classes; 3) subjects studied in Primary Six; 4) extra-curricular activities; 5) help received in preparing for the CEE; 6) the importance of the CEE; and 7) paid job facilities for primary leavers.

Each session in essay writing began with a general introduction given by the investigator on the main purposes and procedures of the test. The investigator then wrote on the board the essay title and distributed answer scripts to the pupils. They were then asked to fill in the following information: school, name, sex, region, place of birth, parental education and occupation.

Having provided their biodata, there was a discussion related to pupils' experiences of the CEE which lasted for about one hour and thirty minutes. It needs to be stressed that the use of prepared topics and the preceding discussions were not meant to impose constraints on what the pupils had to write; rather they were used to give meaningful structure to the activities. Thus, at the end of the discussions, the investigator asked pupils to write out essays based on whatever topics interested them most. He further informed pupils to write as much as they were able. Pupils then began to write essays which lasted for one hour and thirty minutes. At the end, there was a short discussion on their views about the test. Virtually all of them had expressed great delight in being afforded the opportunity to relive their previous experiences about the CEE.

### 3.9.7 Test 11: Sentence-Completion Test

The content, format and administration of this test were similar to that described earlier for the Primary Six sample. On the whole pupils spent about one hour and thirty minutes on the test.

### 3.9.8 Interview Procedures

As the main methodological focus of the investigation was to contrast the views expressed by different responding groups on a number of issues pertaining to the CEE, the major objectives in conducting all the interviews were similar. These were: a) to obtain data on the attitudes of the groups towards the CEE and primary education generally; b) to assess the impact of these perceptions on the development of exam-oriented attitudes; and c) to find out how such examination orientation could generate pressures likely to affect teaching and learning processes and the primary curriculum. Additionally, interviews held with educational administrators dealt with some of these issues, but these latter interviews were more concerned with discussions such as the aims and objectives, design, administration and problems of the CEE and primary education respectively. All the interviews were administered by the investigator and occasionally assisted by interpreters.



### 3.10 INTERVIEWS WITH PRIMARY HEADS AND TEACHERS

The main procedures adopted in interviewing teachers and heads were essentially similar throughout and all the interviews were held in the respective schools in which they were on posting. The interviews were conducted in English. Altogether 15 heads and 18 teachers were interviewed. Of these, 8 and 7 heads, and 10 and 8 teachers respectively, represented urban and rural interviewees. Well before administering the interviews, the investigator prepared typewritten semi-structured interview schedules which, together with a tape recorder, were the interviewing instruments.

The actual interview process on all occasions usually began by a brief introductory remark given by the investigator on the main procedures to be adopted in the course of the interview. Following this, the investigator would set the tape recorder in motion before the conversation began. Thereafter, questions listed on the interview schedules were used to seek all the relevant data that were required. Initially such conversations focused on respondents' biodata, and having obtained this information, the conversation was then directed toward the main questions, supplementaries and prompts taken from the schedule. Both the questions asked by the investigator and the responses given by respondents were recorded. In the course of interviewing, stoppages did occur, very often due to the need to check either if interview was being recorded properly or if respondents experienced problems in providing answers to particular questions. At the end of it all, the tape cassette was rewound in order to enable both

parties to listen to their conversation. Interviews for teachers lasted for about one hour twenty minutes, while those for heads lasted about one hour.

### 3.11 PARENTAL INTERVIEWS

A total of 20 parents were interviewed: 10 from the urban region and 10 from the rural region. Their ages ranged from 21 to 50. Like our groups of heads and teachers, interviews conducted with parents were processed through the use of a semi-structured interview schedule and a tape recorder.

There were certain major procedural differences in interviewing parents who were schooled and those without school experience. With regard to parents who had undergone schooling, the procedures used in interviewing them were very similar to those outlined in interviews with teachers and heads. On the other hand, processes involved in conducting interviews with non-schooled parents were different. In view of similarities in procedures between interviews for literate parents and those for heads and teachers which were described, the next section will only focus on describing the main procedures used in interviewing parents who had no formal school experience.

### 3.12 PROCEDURES FOR NON-LITERATE PARENTAL INTERVIEWS

The dissimilarities referred to above arose largely as a result of using indigenous languages as media in processing

interviews with parents who did not have any school experience. Given this situation, the investigator solicited the assistance of teachers in both regions to participate in the data collection exercise as interpreters.

On each day scheduled for interviewing, the investigator and an interpreter went to the residences of parents. Before the interview commenced, a short introductory briefing was given to parents and interpreter concerning the main processes involved in the interview. Then the conversation began, and the tape recorder was set; following which various questions related to parents' biodata were successively read out in English by the investigator from the prepared schedule. Each time a question was read out, it was first directed to the interpreter who then translated it into the indigenous language spoken by the parent. The parent then responded in the same language and the interpreter translated the response into English for it to be recorded. Each time the interpreter and parent talked in the indigenous language the tape recorder was switched off. Similarly, where the parent experienced problems in responding to a question, the conversation was temporarily stopped to allow the investigator to sort out the problem. At the end of each interview, there was a play-back of the recorded text to enable the interpreter and investigator to check if the information was properly taped. Each interview session lasted for about two hours.



### 3.13 INTERVIEWS WITH EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATORS

Interviews conducted in educational support units by the investigator were essentially unstructured compared to the previous ones. These interviews were all conducted in the premises where the officers were working. Those interviewed were the Assistant Director in charge of educational services, the Director, Curriculum Development Unit and the Senior Assistant Registrar, WAEC, Banjul office.

In administering the interviews, there were no formally prepared interview schedules as such. Instead, on each occasion, the investigator initiated conversation by asking the respondent questions on those aspects of either CEE or primary education for which his unit had responsibility. Thus, the interview conducted with the Assistant Director of Education centred mainly on investigating the aims and objectives of primary education and those formulated for CEE, while the interview held with the Director of Curriculum Development Unit was based on ascertaining the various ways in which CEE militated against genuine curriculum reform exercises in primary schools. On the other hand, the interview organised at the WAEC offices dealt with the design and administration of CEE, including the dissemination of its results. Interviews administered in the Department of Education and the Curriculum Development Unit were recorded on the tape recorder while that at WAEC was not.

### 3.14 ADDITIONAL SOURCES OF PRIMARY DATA

In addition to the foregoing sets of data, a number of visits were made by the investigator to other state establishments for the purposes of collecting and collating a wide range of relevant secondary data on CEE and the National School System. These visits enabled the following to be obtained: a) part of the CEE results 1979 - 83; b) primary school syllabus; c) previous reports on CEE; and d) several policy dossiers on education and the economy.

## CHAPTER 4

### PERCEPTIONS ON EMPLOYMENT PROSPECTS FOR PRIMARY LEAVERS, THE COMMON ENTRANCE EXAMINATION (CEE) AND PRIMARY SCHOOL OUTCOMES

#### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

Previous discussions in Chapter 1 highlighted the scarcity of salaried jobs that school leavers in general anticipate, especially those provided by the government. There were also references to the non-use of the CEE in certain civil service establishments either for hiring labour or training prospective employees. In addition, various social and economic values associated with the CEE were mentioned. In view of the likely impact of these issues in accelerating demands for success in the CEE, the discussions in this chapter will concentrate on investigating the views of the respondent groups referred to in the previous chapter on the status of primary leavers in the job markets; on the CEE; and on primary school outcomes.

In accordance with the triangulation approach being adopted in this dissertation, the organisation of the interpretative discussions in Chapters 4 and 5 will be first to take each major theme in turn and consider the evidence on it from each of the respondent groups. At the end of the discussions in each chapter, the opinions expressed by the respondent groups on a number of major themes being investigated will be summarised. However, because of the problems which affected the collection of the main data of this dissertation (see Chapter 3) and in particular resulted in the small



size of the adult samples and the unevenness of both these and the children's samples, no attempt will be made to relate or explain the main data in Chapters 4 and 5 in terms of the respondent group's personal characteristics. Instead such explanations will be made mainly with reference to the social, economic and school data related to The Gambia, most of which were described in Chapters 1 and 3.

In view of the relatively small size of the adult samples, in Chapters 4 and 5 the results derived from these respondent groups will be referred to in numerical aggregates, while those from pupils are presented in percentages. It is also important to note that, for the research questions or items which attracted multiple responses, it is common for the total number of frequencies of responses to be higher than the number of respondents in each group. In the case of pupils, a few of their answer scripts were discarded as will be explained in the data analysis section in this chapter. Therefore, the total numbers to be stated for children's samples at the bottom of certain data tables, especially for the Form One sample, may occasionally vary. Furthermore, in analysing the main data, children's responses to some of the questions and other items which were essentially unrelated to the issues under investigation would appear in the data tables in the columns referred to as unclassified information. For such responses, total frequencies rather than the category of responses are stated.

As indicated earlier, the opinions of parents, heads and teachers on the themes to be investigated in the following two data chapters were sampled through the use of interviews, whilst those of Form One and Primary Six were obtained from essays and sentence-

completion devices, and questionnaires and sentence-completion devices respectively. The main data collected from the few educational administrators through interviews concerned mostly their views about what changes might be made in the use of the CEE so as to minimise its problems. Some of these results will be referred to in the final chapter of the dissertation. The discussions to be presented in this chapter are preceded by a brief description of the methods and procedures used in analysing the various sets of main data.

#### 4.2 DESCRIPTION OF DATA ANALYSIS

The following two chapters of the dissertation provide interpretative descriptions and discussions concerning the main findings of the study. Before turning to these issues, the methods and procedures adopted in analysing the data statistically will be described. In Chapter 3, the main sources of these data were indicated. These are interviews, sentence-completion tests, essays and questionnaires. Items constituting the first three devices were either of free-response, or fill-in type, whereas those in the last one had been pre-coded and could thus be scored objectively. Based on certain fundamental procedural differences in analysing responses from the two categories of instruments, it became necessary to divide the contents of this section in accordance with these differences.

### 4.3 ANALYSES OF INTERVIEW, ESSAY AND SENTENCE- COMPLETION DATA

All the above sets of data were hand-analysed by the investigator. For each device, a post-test coding of responses was adopted which provided opportunities for other people to analyse the data also. These strategies had enabled inter-rater reliability tests to be conducted on the main themes and coding schemes that emerged from the results.

The various analyses undertaken were meant to achieve three different objectives: establishment of recurring themes from responses, creation of response categories, and quantification of the results. With regard to the interview data, the use of pre-set questions with tentative objectives stipulated for each and the small size of the samples facilitated the execution of these tasks. Similar objectives were also envisaged for the sentence-completion data but these did not apply to the essays. At this juncture, an item will be selected for each type of data in order to illustrate the specific processes involved in quantifying it.

#### 4.3.1 Interview Data: Example

##### CODING FORM

Number of cases analysed:	20
Question number:	P 15a
Question:	Could primary leavers secure paid jobs elsewhere in the country?



Table 4.1: Example of Analysed Interview Data

Response	Tally marks	Group frequency scores	Regional frequency scores	
			<u>Urban</u>	<u>Rural</u>
		(N = 20)	(N = 10)	(N = 10)
			<u>Urban</u>	<u>Rural</u>
Yes	1	6	2	4
Not certain	111	3	1	2
No	1	11	7	4

In analysing the data for the above question, each response was first transcribed and read several times so as to check on the consistency of both the theme and the response categories identified earlier. These activities ultimately produced the three types of responses indicated. Afterwards, responses for each category were recorded and then counted as tally scores. When all the tallying was completed for all the responses, the tally marks were added as total frequencies in respect of group and regional data. Due to the small size of the interview samples, it was thought unnecessary to analyse the results beyond the calculation of total frequency scores. Whereas the foregoing question had tapped single responses, several others that required respondents to 'describe' or indicate the 'functions' of topics and institutions respectively attracted multiple responses.

#### 4.3.2 Essay Data: Example

In analysing the essays, scripts accepted for use were first arranged in a predetermined order adopted for this sample, based on their identification numbers. Altogether 14 essay scripts were rejected because they were incomprehensible. Then the first and last five per cent of the remainder were analysed for the purposes of determining consistent themes and response categories. One of the common themes identified, whose processes of analysis will be described here, was 'Subjects taken by Form One Pupils in their former primary schools'.

##### CODING FORM

Number of essay scripts collected: 255

Number of essay scripts analysed: 241

Sample analysis theme: Subjects taken by Form One Pupils in  
Primary Six

Table 4.2: Example of Analysed Essay Data

Response	Total group frequency scores (N = 241)	Total regional frequency scores	
		<u>Urban</u> (N = 197)	<u>Rural</u> (N = 44)
CEE subjects	167	138	29
Non CEE subjects	31	21	10
No response	43	38	5

The various approaches used in quantifying the sentences into frequency scores were similar to those mentioned in the previous section. In addition, total frequency scores for group and regional results were converted into percentages. Percentage scores derived from these data are presented in Table 4.3. Analyses of other themes had produced multiple as well as mixed-response categories.

#### 4.3.3 Sentence-Completion Data: Example

As with interview responses, analysis of the sentence-completion data was less problematic as far as the selection of common themes and response categories were concerned. By referring to the objectives exemplified in each item, it was easy to determine these characteristics from the completed sentences. However, before beginning the main analysis, the type of sample analysis done for the essays was also applied mainly to secure further checks on identified themes and response categories. These exercises were useful because it was possible to establish a few more of both variables. The main procedures adopted to analyse the sentences which were like those cited earlier, produced these results:

Number of incomplete-sentences administered: 255

Number of scripts analysed: 235

Sample of incomplete-sentence to be analysed: (F 10) "When someone gets a better grade than me in class, I ——"



Table 4.3: Example of Analysed Sentence-Completion Data

Response	Total group frequency scores	Total regional frequency scores	
	(Multiple responses)	<u>Rural</u>	<u>Urban</u>
	(N = 235)	(N = 191)	(N = 44)
Become sad	110	87	23
Compete by working harder	73	59	14
Become angry	47	39	8
Feel ashamed	21	17	4
Become jealous	14	12	2
Ask a child to explain the work	9	7	2
Accept it	7	6	1
Unclassified data	20	13	7

This particular item yielded multiple-responses. The response 'unclassified data' refers to results that were incomprehensible. Percentages obtained from these frequencies may be seen on p. .

#### 4.4 ANALYSES OF QUESTIONNAIRES: EXAMPLE

Items in these instruments were pre-coded and the objectives they sought to test were clearly predetermined. Additionally, the response categories were all assigned varying

numerical values. In contrast to the sets of data stated previously, data from both questionnaires had been analysed by computer using an SCSS program format.

Prior to feeding the data for each questionnaire into the computer, raw scores obtained from questions were recorded on specially provided coding forms. The first 11 locations on each form contain information on children's personal characteristics and family background. These were: a) identification number; b) sex; c) nationality; d) religion; e) region; f) school; g) tribe; h) home language; i) use of English in children's homes; j) parental occupation; and k) parental education. The rest comprised observed scores from the questionnaires. Each question and response category was assigned variable names. These pieces of information were typed into the computer for storage in the disk file. Having done this, an SCSS 'Masterfile' to house the raw data was created. This enabled the data to be entered into the system of the computer so that it might be used when the need arose.

In analysing the data, such procedures as univariate analyses and cross-tabulations were used. These methods enabled total frequencies, percentages and tables to be produced. Moreover, it was possible to compare the relationship of any two or more different variables as well as their differences.

Some of the results which were not referred to in the foregoing descriptions will be presented either in the ensuing chapters or in appendices. Having analysed each category of data, the main findings were divided into the following in relation to the objectives of the study.

## 4.5 DATA FOR ANALYSIS

### 4.5.1 Interview Data

- 1) Conception of education, especially primary.
- 2) Attitudes towards the CEE.
- 3) Views of primary leavers' employment prospects.

In addition, teachers' interview data included topics such as the impact of the CEE in distorting the primary curriculum and also learning.

### 4.5.2 Essay Data

- 1) Problems experienced at the primary school.
- 2) Strategies adopted by pupils to cope with preparations for the CEE.
- 3) Subjects studied and learnt in Primary Six classes.
- 4) Parental participation in primary education.
- 5) Employment prospects for primary leavers.

### 4.5.3 Sentence-Completion Data

- 1) Attitudes towards the CEE.
- 2) Attitudes towards general education, especially primary.
- 3) Effects of the CEE on learning.
- 4) Effects of the CEE on teaching.
- 5) Impact of the CEE in distorting the primary curriculum.



#### 4.5.4 Questionnaire Data

- 1) Attitudes towards primary education.
- 2) Attitudes towards the CEE.
- 3) Effects of the CEE on learning.
- 4) Effects of the CEE on teaching.
- 5) Effects of the CEE on the primary curriculum.
- 6) Views on primary leavers' employment prospects.

Having described how the main data in the various measuring instruments were analysed, we shall now consider the main findings that emerged. These interpretative discussions will commence with investigations into employment prospects for primary leavers in the following section.

## SECTION I

### 4.6 PERCEPTIONS ON EMPLOYMENT PROSPECTS FOR PRIMARY LEAVERS

#### 4.6.1 Parental Sample

Q: P 8 b and c

Table 4.4: Views of Parents on the Availability of Local Job Prospects for Primary Leavers

Response	Total No. (N = 20)	Urban (N = 10)	Rural (N = 10)
Available	4	1	3
Not available	15	8	7
Do not know	1	1	-

Table 4.5: Parents' Responses to "Could primary leavers secure paid jobs elsewhere in the country?"

Response	Total No. (N = 20)	Urban (N = 10)	Rural (N = 10)
Yes	6	2	4
Not certain	3	1	2
No	11	7	4

**Table 4.6:** Parents' Explanations of Poor Job Prospects for Primary Leavers

Response	Total No. (N = 20)	Urban (N = 10)	Rural (N = 10)
Low educational standard	15	9	6
Children too young	3	-	3
Job scarcity	2	1	1

### **Discussion**

The responses in Table 4.4 show that most parents do feel pessimistic about paid jobs in their locality for primary leavers. This seems understandable given the problems encountered by parents in maintaining their children in school, their desires in securing such jobs for pupils and their tacit knowledge about problems encountered by primary leavers in getting wage employment. The opinions expressed by the regional samples did not vary much. A very small number (all in the rural sample) referred to the local paid jobs for primary leavers in their region; however, virtually all the jobs cited were of the non-white-collar and low-paid category.

On question b, all parents stated that post-primary graduates, particularly those from secondary high schools, could obtain local salaried jobs. This suggests that job scarcity might not fully explain why primary leavers could not obtain local jobs. As shown in table 4.5, most parents mentioned lack of paid jobs prospects for primary leavers in other regions. This pessimism was



voiced more by urban than rural parents probably because of their conviction that such jobs are usually scarce in rural areas. Against this, a small number thought it was possible for leavers to find jobs elsewhere; some rural parents seemed to believe that opportunities for salaried employment were more likely to exist in urban areas. Therefore, at both local and national level, a majority of parents were despondent about primary leavers' employment prospects. Some of the comments taken from their interview data help to highlight further the plight of primary completers' in getting paid jobs:

Well here, there is no work which is available for early school leavers from primary schools; they cannot get any jobs.

Rural school parent

For primary leavers, I do not think there is any sort of paid jobs for them. When a child leaves a primary school, that is the end of him.

Urban parent

Well, the only paid labour here I think is from Sapu [that is, the main rural agricultural station] where they do gardening, weeding and other labourer jobs.

Rural parent

According to the data in Table 4.6, most parents seem to blame primary leavers' job problems on the poor standards of education attained at the end of their primary course. This appears to arise from their experiences regarding the discrimination in job markets between primary and secondary leavers which tends to favour the latter. This unfavourable assessment of primary education was fairly high in the urban sample probably because the use of higher qualifications to determine entry into salaried jobs is more predominant in that region than in the rural area. In consequence, only a very small number of parents tended to perceive

leavers' job problems in terms of their age or job scarcity as the results indicate.

From the results discussed so far, it appears as if the majority of parents were pessimistic about primary leavers' chances of obtaining wage-employment in the country. This view was held by more urban parents than their rural counterparts due mainly to the former's contacts with such jobs. And a greater number of parents attributed leavers' grim employment prospects to the low quality of primary education.

#### 4.6.2 Primary School Heads

Q: H 12 a, b and c

Table 4.7: The Opinions of Primary Heads on the Availability of Local Job Prospects for Primary Leavers

Response	Total No. (N = 15)	Urban (N = 8)	Rural (N = 7)
Available	4	2	2
Not available	11	6	5

Table 4.8: Heads' Responses to "Could primary leavers secure paid jobs elsewhere in the country?"

Response	Total No. (N = 15)	Urban (N = 8)	Rural (N = 7)
Yes	4	2	2
Not certain	8	4	4
No	3	2	1

Table 4.9: Heads' Explanations of Poor Job Prospects for Primary Leavers

Response	Total No. (N = 15)	Urban (N = 8)	Rural (N = 7)
Poor educational status	8	4	4
Children too young	4	2	2
Secondary leavers preferred	3	2	1

### Discussion

The great pessimism reported in the parental sample concerning leavers' job prospects is echoed by the majority of heads. Again there was little regional difference, suggesting that paid jobs are not available anywhere in the country for primary leavers. Also in both regions, the majority who suggested that jobs might be available cited low-paid jobs.

The despondency expressed by heads highlights further primary leavers' problems in getting paid employment in both regions. But in the case of secondary leavers, virtually all heads reiterated the views of parents that it may be possible for these graduates to find employment locally.

In Table 4.8, roughly equal numbers answered yes and no, but over half the heads were not sure if such prospects did exist or not. In both regions, the few respondents who expressed optimism cited only menial and low-paid jobs which were less likely to be



attractive to pupils. The views held by the majority are surprising since heads are always perceived by society as being well informed about pupils' career prospects. This uncertainty, however, may be a further indication of unfavourable job prospects for primary leavers in other parts of the country.

Although many heads did not refer to lack of paid employment opportunities for primary leavers in other sections of the country, nevertheless they had earlier indicated this in their responses to the existence of job facilities for primary leavers in their communities. These views are exemplified in the following comments from their interview:

I do not think there is anything available for them [primary leavers] except for messengers and labourers. Even in government service, grade 4 is the lowest. Even for that they require certain certificates. There are no well established jobs for them other than going back to the farm.

Urban head

This is doubtful, this is doubtful, because if for anything at all, employers are looking for children with secondary education ... who are highly qualified. So there is hardly any space for primary leavers.

Rural head

Like the parental group, most of the heads tended to believe that the poor status of primary education was the main constraint on primary leavers' employment prospects, and this opinion was equally held in urban and rural samples as revealed in Table 4.9. In contrast, a very small number seemed to regard children's age and employers' preferences for secondary leavers respectively as major obstacles. As stated earlier, the negative perception on primary education in both regions appears to emanate from labour market practices in the modern sector which tended to offer less prospects to primary completers.

#### 4.6.3 Primary Teachers

Q: T 22 a, b and c

Table 4.10: The Views of Teachers about the Availability of Local Job Prospects for Primary Leavers

Response	Total No. (N = 18)	Urban (N = 10)	Rural (N = 8)
Available	5	2	3
Do not know	3	2	1
Not available	10	6	4

Table 4.11: Teachers' Responses to "Could primary leavers secure paid jobs elsewhere in the country?"

Response	Total No. (N = 18)	Urban (N = 10)	Rural (N = 8)
Yes	4	3	1
Not certain	5	1	4
No	9	6	3

Table 4.12: Teachers' Explanations of Poor Job Prospects for Primary Leavers

Response	Total No. (N = 18)	Urban (N = 10)	Rural (N = 8)
Poor educational standard	10	6	4
Children too young	2	1	1
Secondary leavers preferred	6	3	3

## Discussion

The majority of teachers also seemed pessimistic about primary leavers' chances of getting salaried employment in their communities. The fact that this pessimism was expressed more in the urban sample than in the rural one seems to indicate that leavers in the former are after all not better off in terms of securing paid jobs despite the heavy concentration of white-collar jobs in the area. In comparison, a slightly higher number of teachers were optimistic that leavers could secure locally based salaried employment. However, once again all the respondents in this category referred only to jobs which were less likely to be demanded by leavers.

However, whereas local job prospects for primary leavers were poor according to the majority of teachers, on the other hand all of them thought such prospects were bright for secondary graduates. These differential perceptions appear to suggest that access to salaried employment could be enhanced by entry into a secondary school.

Once again, as indicated in Table 4.11, a higher proportion of teachers, especially in the urban sample, did not believe primary leavers were likely to get paid jobs elsewhere in the country. This relatively higher pessimism in the urban area may be based on an assumption that the use of school qualifications in job selection might also apply outside the city. Furthermore, scarcity of salaried employment in other regions of the country and especially in the rural sector might have increased urban teachers' despair. On the other hand, fewer rural teachers were pessimistic perhaps



because of the belief that opportunities for wage employment for primary leavers were more likely to be available in urban areas.

Of the small number of teachers who mentioned the possibility of job prospects, the urban respondents mainly stated farm work in rural areas although such activities hardly attract any immediate or sustained incomes. And accordingly, it was only in the rural sample that knowledge about external job prospects for primary leavers was poor. The majority of respondents in this group comprised teachers from neighbouring states, such as Sierra Leone and Ghana, who took up teaching jobs in the country and were posted to the CEE classes.

Therefore, on the basis of the overall views expressed by teachers, it appears once again as if primary leavers would indeed find it difficult to find wage-employment in the country. This pessimism is illustrated by some of the remarks made by the teachers:

There are no such jobs laid out for these children [primary leavers]. They have to hustle their own way out and see how best they could just fit in themselves in life.

Urban teacher

As far as primary leavers are concerned, I have not seen any jobs available for them unless they go back to the farm or where their parents have gardens, they can go back and help in gardening.

Rural teacher

Not likely, for if you are from a primary school that alone is something terrible to you. You feel that you are not in the society. What they can do is to assist their relatives, for example keeping the house clean, etc.

Urban teacher

Well, in my own area, I don't think frankly speaking it has any paid jobs available except of course for secondary leavers. For primary leavers, I don't see any jobs.

Rural teacher

As was the case with parents and heads, the results in Table 4.12 show that the majority of teachers attributed primary

leavers' problems in getting paid employment mainly to the poor status of primary education. The fact that this view was expressed slightly more in the urban sample seems to highlight the wider usage in this region of school-based qualifications in recruiting employees.

Their concern is probably based not only on their awareness of the standard of primary education, but equally on a belief that employers are aware of this and are thus likely to discriminate against primary leavers. For example, as the data in Table 4.12 show, a slightly higher number, especially in rural areas, actually voiced employers' preference for secondary graduates rather than primary leavers as one major obstacle to the latter getting paid jobs. The concern expressed by rural teachers on this issue seems to be understandable given the relative scarcity of secondary school places in their areas. On the other hand, probably as a result of problems associated with determining leavers' actual chronological ages, teachers did not appear to regard the age at which pupils leave the primary school as being a decisive factor in impeding their job opportunities.

#### 4.6.4 Form One Pupils: Essay Data

Data pertaining to pupils' opinions on employment prospects for primary leavers derived from the essays they were asked to write about their experiences of the CEE. One of the major themes included in their essays was job opportunities for primary leavers. The scripts were divided into three categories, as shown in Table

4.13; 'No response' indicates that the essays offered no opinion on the availability of jobs.

Table 4.13: Form One Pupils' Perceptions on Employment Prospects for Primary Leavers

Response	Total % (N = 241)	Urban % (N = 197)	Rural % (N = 44)
Available	20	20	22
Not available	50	49	55
No response	30	31	23

### Discussion

Pupils' views on the existence of employment facilities for primary leavers were equally negative: half appeared not to be hopeful. This latter opinion was entertained slightly more in the rural sample than in the urban sample. Against this, a small proportion referred to the availability of jobs for primary leavers; however there is not much optimism in this evidence because the type of jobs commonly cited in their responses, such as fishing, gardening, petty trading, are usually less appealing to school leavers. This negative view might be attributed to the removal of the CEE pressure and their admission into desired secondary high schools and the fact that they could have elected not to refer to the issue of employment for primary leavers while writing essays. Because of the latter, the 'No response' rate was fairly high.

As regards reasons for lack of jobs for primary leavers, most pupils blamed this on the poor quality of primary education.



Some of the comments made in pupils' essays illustrate this point:

The only job I would have if I did not go to a secondary high school was farming.

Urban pupil

When you leave school at primary, you will not get a good job because your education is low.

Urban pupil

There is no salary for a person leaving a primary school unless you become a maid or a servant.

Rural pupil

#### 4.6.5 Primary Six Pupils

Q: PAQ 7 (see Appendix D)

Pupils were asked to provide responses to this question by choosing any three of the defining characteristics of a good job mentioned in the question. They were asked to select more than one variable because it was assumed they might have in their minds several attributes of a good job, although allowing them to select only three alternatives could have restricted the breadth of their definitions. The results are shown in Table 4.14.

Table 4.14: Primary Six Pupils' Perceptions of a Good Job (Multiple responses permitted: entries total more than 100%)

Response	Total % (N = 359)	Urban % (N = 235)	Rural % (N = 124)
Good pay	70	75	60
Promotion	64	60	71
Permanent	56	51	65
Interesting	43	45	38
Easy	34	30	41
Skill-demanding	32	37	23

## Discussion

It is clear that the three most important characteristics associated with a good job were attractive pay, better prospects for advancement and security. Good pay has gained more support in the urban sample than in the rural sample while the reverse is true in the case of jobs offering promotion and security. Therefore, our previous observations that pupils might not appreciate doing low-paid jobs seems to be substantiated.

By comparison, interesting, easy, or skill-demanding jobs received low ratings. Consequently, our assumptions were borne out from their responses to interesting and skill-demanding jobs since it was contended the majority would give less emphasis to these factors. But on the other hand, the low response rate for easy jobs was actually the obverse of what was assumed. This means that jobs which pupils perceive as having good prospects and pay might not necessarily be those that are easily performed. With regards to these latter attributes, a slightly higher number of urban children seemed to be inclined towards interesting and skill-demanding jobs than their rural counterparts. This evidence seems to be reinforced according to the responses to the easy-job category in which a slightly higher proportion of rural children relative to those in the urban area tended to favour such jobs.

The great importance accorded by children to jobs associated with higher financial attractions, good career advancement and permanence might after all not have indicated unrealistic aspirations. Instead it could be viewed as a consequence of their realisation regarding the value of such jobs, their scarcity in the country as well as problems usually

experienced by primary leavers in the modern sector in getting such jobs. Information on these issues is usually fed to children through contacts with parents, secondary school children, teachers, and from exhortations made at school assemblies.

The slight inter-regional differences which emerged in children's responses as depicted in Table 4.14 could hardly be interpreted without reference to the nature of major employment available in each respective region. A slightly higher percentage of urban than rural children selected characteristics such as good pay, interesting and skill-demanding, factors likely to be associated with urban white-collar employment. Against this, their preferences for promotion and security which are also essential attributes of urban jobs were relatively low. Likewise, a slightly greater proportion of rural than urban respondents tended to desire jobs that could be performed with ease but permanently held, with good opportunities for promotion. However, in the rural sector, the predominant activity, which is peasant farming, is often described as being labour-intensive and thus not easy to do, as well as being essentially seasonal, lasting from June to September each year. These rural perceptions tended to indicate pupils' aversion to farm work as a life-long career and their likely preferences for urban white-collar jobs.



Q: PPAQ 8

Table 4.15: Primary Six Pupils' Responses to "Are there good jobs for primary leavers in the area in which you live?"

Response	Total % (N = 359)	Urban % (N = 235)	Rural % (N = 124)
Yes	16	18	12
Not certain	26	22	33
No	58	60	55

### Discussion

The high proportion of responses in the 'No' category show that local jobs children would normally perceive as being good might not be available to primary leavers in the communities where they live. The small difference that appears in the inter-regional data seems to reveal a great pessimism in both regions. Thus a very small number of children referred to the availability of job facilities while over a quarter seemed not to be sure if there were. In both the 'Yes' response and the 'No' response urban children relative to their rural colleagues expressed more the opinions stated by the majority, whereas in the 'Not certain' response the situation is reversed.

This high degree of pessimism seems to give further corroboration to the assertion made in the preceding discussion concerning children's knowledge of the labour market. Even at this premature age, they seemed to be aware that circumstances other than

job scarcity might affect primary leavers' employment prospects. We shall refer to a more intensive discussion pertaining to such constraints later when we examine children's views on these issues.

Q: PPAQ 9

Table 4.16: Primary Six Pupils' Opinions about the Availability of National Job Prospects for Primary Leavers

Response	Total % (N = 359)	Urban % (N = 235)	Rural % (N = 124)
Yes	17	21	9
Not certain	18	21	13
No	65	58	78

### Discussion

By contrasting these results with their previous ones, it appears as if primary leavers' chances in securing good jobs in other parts of the country were even more distant. This is possibly due to children's perceived notions that employers everywhere would discriminate against primary leavers as being unsuitable for appointment to paid jobs. But, in contrast to the previous data, rural children were much more pessimistic than urban ones about leavers' prospects in getting good jobs elsewhere. The latter's despair may be explained in terms of the predominant use of qualifications in the urban sector for selecting employees.

However, a slightly greater proportion of urban respondents as against rural ones were uncertain about job facilities for leavers in rural areas. Since most job-seeking traffic in the country is usually from rural-to-urban, urban children are therefore more likely not to be well informed about the state of rural jobs. Also, the fact that self-employed jobs such as farming are known to exist more in the rural sector than in the urban one (even if these were not lucrative), might have inspired slightly more urban respondents than rural ones in the small group expressing a yes-response to be optimistic about leavers' chances in securing paid jobs in rural areas.

Q: PPAQ 10

Table 4.17: Primary Six Pupils' Explanations of Why Primary Leavers do not get National Good Jobs. (Multiple entries permitted: entries total more than 100%)

Response	Total % (N = 359)	Urban % (N = 235)	Rural % (N = 124)
Primary leavers too young	87	84	87
Primary testimonial cannot secure jobs	86	86	81
Secondary leavers usually preferred	73	67	78
A pass in the CEE cannot secure jobs	64	62	65



## Discussion

From the preceding discussions, it seems as if primary leavers were less likely to find paid jobs either locally or nationally according to the majority of children. But whereas we might partly associate their poor prospects in getting local jobs with job scarcity, that of national jobs could have other possible explanations. Therefore, the 234 children (N = 359) who responded negatively to the question were asked to select reasons why they thought leavers could not obtain jobs elsewhere in the country.

According to Table 4.17, the majority of children seemed convinced that such constraints as age, low evaluations of school leaving testimonial, preference for secondary leavers and low evaluation of the CEE all tended to affect leavers' employment prospects. Amongst these factors, leavers' premature age and the inability of their termination certificates in securing jobs for them stand out as the most considerable constraints.

These results are quite easy to comprehend because, by the time children complete the primary course, they are between 14 and 15 years old and thus too young to be considered by many employers for job placement. Their views on this issue are justified especially since the minimum age stipulated for entry into the civil service is higher than this age range. Similarly, the primary leaving testimonial is usually not valued highly in the job market because of its low perceived status by employers. These views tend to confirm the contention made earlier that CEE candidates have reliable sources of knowledge on labour market practices affecting them. Likewise, in the modern sector job markets, employers are most likely to recruit secondary completers for jobs rather than those leaving primary because certificates awarded to leavers from

the former are usually valued relatively more than those from the latter. In the same vein, a mere success in the CEE could hardly be enough to guarantee primary leavers paid jobs.

The regional responses appear to show similar concern about the possible influences of these attributes in preventing leavers getting jobs in other parts of the country. Like the group data, pupils' age and the status of primary leaving testimonial were perceived more than the rest by regional groups as the most important obstacles to leavers' chances of getting such jobs. Nevertheless, the higher rating given to all the variables in each region seems to show that they were all perceived by children as acting in unison to hamper leavers' employment prospects nationwide.

Additionally, rural children tended to show slightly more concern than urban children about the impact of age, preference for secondary graduates, and CEE pass rate. Their concern for age presumably stems from the preference in rural areas for children to begin schooling late so that they are more mature before leaving school and thus more able to fend for themselves, whereas their rating on preference for secondary leavers and CEE pass rate seems to be related to disadvantages in getting these facilities in rural areas. In contrast, urban children's slight concern for the poor status of the primary school testimonial may be explained in terms of modern sector labour market practices in their region which give primacy to the use of higher credentials. Thus, like their Form One colleagues, the majority of primary six children tend to believe that jobs they may regard as being good could not possibly be made available to primary leavers. This section concludes the discussions related to primary leavers' employment facilities.

## SECTION 2

### 4.7 ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE COMMON ENTRANCE EXAMINATION (CEE)

In this section an attempt is made to discuss the main findings related to propositions about attitudes to the CEE which were outlined previously. The discussions will concentrate on such schemes as the importance of the CEE, results in the examination, support offered in its preparations and factors likely to influence success in it. As in the previous section, the perceptions made by each group will be examined separately, starting with those of parents.

#### 4.7.1 Parental Sample

Q: P 6

Table 4.18: Parents' Reasons for encouraging Pupils to complete the Primary Course (Categories mentioned in free response: entries total more than N)

Response	Total (N = 20)	Urban (N = 10)	Rural (N = 10)
High school entry	16	9	7
Job preparation	10	6	4
Knowledge	4	1	3



## Discussion

The majority of parents agreed that the main reason for allowing their children to complete the primary course was to enable the latter to transfer to secondary high school. There was only a minor difference in the views expressed in the regions on this matter, which indicates the degree of importance given to pupils' enrolment in secondary high school in both regions. Half the number (mostly from the urban sample) cited job preparation as the main reason for children's completing primary school. In contrast, a small number of parents referred to knowledge associated with secondary education, and this view was expressed equally in both regions.

The opinion expressed by the majority on their preference for secondary entry seems justified not only as a result of the attractions of high salaries, but more so because, as shown earlier, a higher number thought employers did discriminate against primary completers in favour of secondary leavers. And, given that the main reason for this, as discussed earlier, was perceived low evaluation of primary education, parents tended to voice more preference for secondary school entry than for the acquisition of knowledge. This view was expressed slightly more in the urban sample probably because, as shown in previous instances, practices such as the use of qualifications in job markets are associated more commonly with the labour market in the former area than the latter one.

Based on these findings, it appears as if most of the parents tended to perceive children's stay in the primary school more as a preparatory period for the CEE than for pursuing the official primary syllabus. And, although the majority did not refer

directly to the desire to acquire jobs for children as their main reason for wanting secondary education for them, nevertheless, references made to obtaining certificates from secondary schools which usually serve as visas to modern sector jobs seemed to suggest that as part of the reason. Their strong dispositions towards acquiring certificates for children are highlighted in the following comments:

In this country, higher education means passing ... CEE and going to a high school. It is then easier for the child to follow the normal course up to form six, then get a scholarship to a university to try to earn a good certificate.

Urban parent

I want [the child] to be educated because I feel primary six is not enough ... but what I am praying to God is for [the child] to attend a high school and even higher than that in order to get good papers.

Rural parent

Q: P 6

Table 4.19: Parents' Views on Resit in the CEE for their Children

Response	Total No. (N = 20)	Urban (N = 10)	Rural (N = 10)
Will encourage resit indefinitely	10	2	8
Will encourage resit for specified times	6	5	1
Will encourage resit if child allowed by school	2	1	1
Will encourage resit if child likely to pass	1	1	-
No resits expected	1	1	-

## Discussion

Half of all parents were prepared to encourage their children to resit the CEE for as long as they were unsuccessful. This desire was expressed more strongly by rural parents; the explanation is probably not only that the area would normally enrol fewer children, but equally because official guidelines on resits in the CEE are more likely to be relaxed in the rural region than in the urban region. This is mainly due to the problems of keeping accurate records on resits and births in rural areas. These guidelines particularly emphasise: a) that pupils must not resit more than twice; b) that those accepted for resits must be below fifteen years old; and c) only those likely to perform better on a further trial be allowed to resit (GG/ED, 1981: 87).

Probably as a result of these restrictions, a fairly high number of parents, mostly in the urban sample, said they would allow children to be re-examined for only a specific number of occasions. The fear expressed by this group was similar to that of the very small group of parents who indicated they would encourage resits if children were allowed by their schools as candidates for the CEE. The overall perceptions indicate not only the existence of strong preferences for repetition but also the degree to which parents' desire concerning resits may conflict with official regulations, especially the emphasis on allowing only children likely to do well in the examination to be accepted for resits. As the data in Table 4.19 show, only one urban parent has actually referred to this realistic view. In general, repetition is emphasised because of the belief that it helps to improve children's performance and thus enables them to gain a secondary high school mark. The preceding



discussions seemed to reveal further the importance which the majority of parents attribute to the CEE.

Q: P 7b

Table 4.20: A Comparison of Sources of Support given to the CEE Preparations by Parents (Categories mentioned in free response: entries total more than N)

Response	Total frequency (N = 20)	Urban (N = 10)	Rural (N = 10)
CEE materials	13	7	6
Lighting/ furniture	8	2	6
Home tuition	7	5	2
Study fees	7	7	-
Prayers	2	-	2

### Discussion

Accordingly, support given by parents in respect of the CEE preparations varied. But in both regions, the most common assistance seems to be the provision of CEE materials which included text books and past papers. Usually teachers and pupils themselves, in rural as well as in urban areas, put pressure on parents to try and buy these resources because the examination is often perceived as being very difficult and requiring such practice. Therefore, without these materials children might not be able to do well.

Additionally, a fairly high number of parents were also giving help in other areas, such as providing an appropriate home-study environment for children in terms of lighting, chairs and tables, paying study fees and giving home tuition. Assistance toward providing a conducive study climate in the home for children and offering goodwill prayers for them were emphasised more by parents in rural areas, probably because they were those unable to offer any scholastic help to children, being non-literate. In contrast, more urban parents were able to provide home tuition services for their children as well as paying study fees for them. However, non-payment of study fees in the rural region has arisen possibly because teachers might be aware of parents' less favourable economic situations compared to those in urban areas.

Q P 7a

Table 4.21: Parents' Views on Factors that help Children to succeed in the CEE (Categories mentioned in free response: entries total more than N)

Response	Total frequency (N = 20)	Urban (N = 10)	Rural (N = 10)
Hard work	16	10	6
CEE materials	10	6	4
Interest in class work	9	2	7
Good memory	1	-	1
Luck	1	-	1

## Discussion

In line with our predictions, most parents, especially in the urban area, believed hard work was the most crucial factor determining children's success in CEE. This view seems to stem from their awareness that the examination is made progressively more difficult each year due to the existence of limited secondary high school places. Therefore, they seemed to be convinced that over diligence exerted by pupils and schools was most likely to bring about success in the examination. This idea was conceived more in the urban sample because teachers and pupils in those areas make more frequent use of examination preparation strategies such as the organisation of large scale and very expensive fee-paying drill classes in schools in the afternoon and during holidays. Mainly because of these classes, half the number of parents cited the provision of CEE resources as being vital in determining success in the examination, based probably on their perception that the success of drill classes depends not only on children's regular attendance, but likewise on the possession and constant use of CEE materials and in particular past papers.

On the other hand, a fairly high number of parents mentioned that success in the CEE depended on the amount of interest children had for their lessons in school. Respondents who expressed this view and were mainly in the rural sample referred to factors such as regularity, attentiveness in class, and heeding teachers' advice as indicative of children's keen interest in learning. Even if these factors alone may not lead to success in the examination, the views represent values associated with success by this group of rural parents. And finally, as may be observed



from their responses, parents did not explicitly consider circumstances such as having a good memory or luck as being important to success in the CEE. These findings, especially the former, were contrary to our expectations. As schools were expected to give much emphasis to rote-memorisation learning in their CEE drill classes, it was envisaged that a great number of parents would consider having a good memory as vital to achieving success in CEE. However, despite this less expected result, the majority tended to value hard work and the use of CEE resources in drill classes and at home rather than comprehension of lessons as the lynchpin to success in the examination.

#### 4.7.2 Primary School Heads

Q: H 9

Table 4.22: Heads' Views on the Importance of the CEE for Their Schools (Categories mentioned in free response: entries total more than N)

Response	Total frequency (N = 15)	Urban (N = 8)	Rural (N = 7)
Enhances societal image	12	6	6
Enhances career advancement	4	2	2
Not important	1	1	-

## Discussion

Most heads in both regions tended to regard the importance of the CEE for the school in terms of its impact in raising society's perceptions of the school. This is possibly due to the practice prevalent in most parts of the country of assessing the success achieved by the school with reference to the CEE pass rate. This view was emphasised particularly in several of the remarks made by heads in their interview data:

Success ... in CEE will give us a good name. We normally have good results ... some pupils from far away are now coming to our school just to pass CEE.

Rural head

Parents tend to judge the good school by the number of CEE passes. If school 'A' has a performance of at least 40 going to high school and at least 60 to secondary technical, and school 'B' just 10 going to high school and 5 to secondary technical, always they would say school 'A' is far more better than school 'B'. The tendency is parents start moving their children from school 'B' to 'A'.

Urban head

Parents' concern for the CEE as well as the pressures they often exert on schools highlight further the great importance usually attached to success in the examination by society. It also confirms that most parents seem to be aware of current labour market practices affecting children. For example, the distinction made in the above comment between the two types of post-primary school appears to be genuine, remembering the evidence indicated in Chapter 1 of this dissertation that it is the secondary high school rather than the secondary technical school that fulfills children's educational and vocational expectations. The importance given to the CEE in providing access to the former always motivates parents to evaluate schools in terms of success in the examination. In comparison, only two heads mentioned that the CEE pass rate enhanced

teachers' career advancement. This latter issue is examined again in the next discussion.

Q: H 9b

Table 4.23: Heads' Views on the Importance of the CEE for Teachers' Career Advancement (Categories mentioned in free response: entries total more than N)

Response	Total frequency (N = 15)	Urban (N = 8)	Rural (N = 7)
Community standing	12	5	7
Career advancement	4	2	2
Not important	2	2	-

### Discussion

As in their previous responses, most heads in both regions seemed to believe that the CEE was much more important in raising a teacher's image in society than in affording them advancement in the career ladder. This evidence is perhaps borne out by their experience that in most parts of both urban and rural areas, teachers, like their schools, are judged good or bad with regard to their achievements in sending pupils to secondary high schools.

By comparison, only four heads thought the CEE pass rate could influence teachers' career prospects, presumably because of the system being adopted in deciding promotions or the award of incremental credits for teachers in the civil service. For instance, teachers, like other civil servants, are often promoted by the Public Service Commission through competing for vacant promotion



posts in the teaching service. But equally, heads might recommend promotion for staff under certain circumstances. Similarly, although the commission could award incremental credits to teachers on the basis of satisfactory job execution, heads could also recommend staff for such incentive awards. But in both situations, it is the prerogative of the commission rather than heads' recommendation that takes precedence when these awards are being decided. Thus the CEE pass rate could only have an indirect influence in determining teachers' career advancement. Nevertheless, in the past, one main criterion adopted by certain heads in recommending teachers either for promotion or for increments on their pay was their past successes in the CEE. In addition, success in the CEE has afforded several teachers the opportunity to open new schools. From these results, it appears as if the CEE pass rate would play a greater role in shaping the societal image of schools and teachers than in enhancing the latter's progress in the teaching profession. This latter evidence contradicts our expectation.

Q: H 9c

Table 4.24: Heads' Views on the Importance of the CEE Pass Rate for Pupils' Careers (Categories mentioned in free response: entries total more than N)

Response	Total frequency (N = 15)	Urban (N = 8)	Rural (N = 7)
Job prospects	11	5	6
High school entry	8	5	3
Gives pupils satisfaction	2	-	2
Not important	1	1	-

## Discussion

Most heads in both regions believed success in the CEE would enable children to have better employment prospects in the modern sectors of the economy. The minor differences noticeable in the views expressed by regional samples tended to show how important this view was perceived to be in the respective regions as well as the problems experienced by primary leavers in getting jobs in these regions. Similarly, over half, especially in the urban area, thought the CEE was vital in affording children the opportunity to enrol in secondary high schools. This finding is related to the first one because, without access to secondary high schools, especially in urban areas, pupils will not be able to secure good job prospects in future.

Therefore, most heads noted the significance of the CEE in fulfilling children's vocational expectations. Of the small minority who did not, two rural heads said the real value of the examination was to provide personal satisfaction or pride to children, while the other did not seem to perceive it as being important.

Q H 5a

Table 4.25: Criteria adopted by Heads in selecting Repeaters for the CEE

Response	Total frequency (N = 15)	Urban (N = 8)	Rural (N = 7)
Advise all unsuccessful candidates	9	4	5
Advise those likely to pass	2	1	1
Allow only those below 15 years	2	1	1
Resits optional	1	1	-
No resits allowed	1	1	-

### Discussion

However, the results show that only a few heads referred to the use of the regulations cited earlier for the admission of children to repetition classes, and even those were unable to adopt all the regulations. The slightly more realistic attitude to repetition in the urban sample than in the rural one was probably because of relatively higher success rates in the CEE and stricter enforcement of the rules in the former. Equally, the only school that did not enrol repeaters for the CEE was an urban school.

In contrast, the majority of heads, especially in the rural sector in which success rates in the CEE are deemed to be low, seemed not to refer to such guidelines when processing intakes for



repetition. Beside their belief that repetition improves the CEE pass rate, these violations are mainly attributable to their perceptions on values attached to the CEE pass rate. As indicated earlier, the majority said the examination was important in boosting the societal image of both their schools and teachers as well as being able to satisfy pupils' future job expectations. Consequently, most heads were prepared to encourage all candidates unsuccessful in the examination to rewrite it in order to try and secure places in secondary high schools rather than accept offers of places in secondary technical schools. This preference is often based on the assumption by society in general that only attendance in the former schools could help to enhance the school image, as well as teachers' and children's career choices.

The results derived from heads so far seem to indicate how importantly they perceived success in the CEE. In view of this, it was argued that the majority would give much support toward its preparations in their schools. This contention was borne out by their responses to the question that sought to assess their relative contributions towards the examination (see Appendix J). For instance, apart from the head in one urban school, virtually all of them agreed that they were using school funds to provide resources needed for the CEE preparations. The main sources of assistance given to the CEE classes were the provision of CEE text books, past papers, organisation of practice classes at school in the afternoon, extra furniture and construction of additional classrooms to accommodate repeaters. The fact that the views expressed in the regions on these issues did not vary much shows the great importance

accorded to providing support for the CEE preparations in both regions.

In the main, heads usually give priority to the purchase of CEE materials because, as revealed earlier, it is believed that without such resources children might not succeed in the examination. Great importance is also given to the provision of extra accommodation particularly in rural areas where acute shortages are more frequent. In the areas concerned, teachers with the help of villagers often undertake self-help school building projects aimed at providing additional accommodation for resit classes or for new streams, using mainly local labour and resources.

Q: H 6

Table 4.26: Heads' Views on Factors that help Children to succeed in the CEE (Categories mentioned in free response: entries total more than N)

Response	Total frequency (N = 15)	Urban (N = 8)	Rural (N = 7)
Practice drill classes	9	6	3
CEE materials	8	4	4
Hard work	8	4	4
Good memory	7	5	2
Understanding	2	1	1
Good teachers	2	1	1

## Discussion

There appears to be a strong link between support given by heads toward preparations for the CEE and their views on success in the examination. As may be recalled, it was indicated in the previous page that important areas of support emphasised by most heads in respect of the CEE included the provision of CEE materials and conduct of extra practice drill classes in school. As a result, the majority appeared to perceive these factors as being crucial to achieving success in the examination. Similarly, since drill classes on the CEE subjects such as Verbal Aptitude and Quantitative Aptitude usually entail cramming, a higher number of heads also referred to children's possession of a good memory as an important tool for enabling them to be successful in the examination. This view, however, contradicts those expressed earlier by parents. In contrast, only two of the heads cited lesson comprehension as a decisive factor for children's success.

As the regional data in Table 4.26 also show, the opinions expressed by urban and rural groups on the use of CEE documentation and on the importance of doing hard work as vital criteria for success in the CEE were basically similar. On the other hand, slight differences favouring urban samples are discernible from their responses to themes such as practice drill classes and good memory. These differences tend to give further support to the previous evidence which indicated that urban schools were more certain to indulge in organised CEE preparatory classes, especially as these are often run on a commercial basis. Therefore like parents, the majority of heads seemed to attribute success in the



CEE mainly to diligence and to thorough utilisation of appropriate examination documentation.

#### 4.7.3 Primary Teachers

Q T 18a

Table 4.27: Teachers' Views on the Importance of the CEE Pass Rate for Their Own Careers (Categories mentioned in free response: entries total more than N)

Response	Total frequency (N = 18)	Urban (N = 10)	Rural (N = 8)
Community image	10	6	4
Professional career advancement	6	3	3
Personal satisfaction	6	5	1

#### Discussion

A small majority of teachers have indicated the CEE was important in enhancing their community image. This opinion, which was slightly higher in the urban sample possibly because of the prevalence of higher competition for the CEE in the area, offers confirmation for one of our assumptions concerning this issue. Therefore, like heads, the majority of teachers tended to believe the CEE pass rate was vital in affording them higher esteem in society. Some of the comments made by teachers during the interviews serve to buttress their views:

Well nowadays in The Gambia a good primary six teacher is determined by the number of passes he has. And a good school is determined by the number of passes they have in CEE. That is why everything depends on the passes of the kids.

Urban teacher

Well with regards to myself, you know the people in the village feel that I am working very hard if pupils in my class pass CEE.

Rural teacher

However, a few teachers seemed to be uneasy about the desire by society to judge their success mainly with reference to the CEE pass rate. The following statement helps to exemplify their views:

In here [urban area] I found that the success of the primary six teacher is measured according to the achievement of children in class. I feel it's wrong but it has been the practice, so I have not been made to react to the situation. I have the belief that my children just have to make it in CEE ... because my career depends on it.

Urban teacher

In contrast, as the results in Table 4.27 show, some teachers thought the CEE could advance their professional careers, although less than half expressed this view. Thus our expectation that the majority might regard the CEE pass rate to boost teachers' chances on the career ladder was not supported. Teachers in general seem to believe that the CEE pass rates do not play an important role in determining their prospects for career advancement. However, it has been argued earlier that this pass rate is in fact used as an important measure of a teacher's quality, for example, in deciding the award of incremental credits or promotions. One of the respondents in this category made references to some of these issues:

Well ... I think I am a successful teacher, I am a good teacher and people start recognising me, and my head or the office recommends me for an incremental award ... and the office will also recognise me.

Urban teacher

It is clear from the responses in the first two categories that the CEE pass rate is viewed as a principal instrument of accountability. Most of the comments were interpreted as 'accountability to the community'. It may well be that these same teachers would, if pressed, agree that the same measure would be used for 'accountability to superiors'.

Apart from these results, the data in Table 4.27 also indicate that a slightly higher number of teachers tended to perceive the value of the CEE pass rate in terms of the personal gratification they derived from it. These were mostly from urban schools with good success records in the CEE who were convinced success in the examination mattered only as far as it afforded them individual job satisfaction. Therefore, as was the case with heads, most teachers seemed to believe the CEE was more important in influencing their standing in society than that of their career advancement.

Q: T 18b

Table 4.28: Teachers' Opinions about the Importance of the CEE for Pupils' Careers (Categories mentioned in free response: entries total more than N)

Response	Total frequency (N = 18)	Urban (N = 10)	Rural (N = 8)
Access to second- ary high school	10	5	5
Future job prospects	8	4	4
Personal satisfaction	1	1	-



## Discussion

Just over half the teachers said the CEE was vital in enabling children to enter secondary high schools, whereas nearly half mentioned its importance in relation to enhancing pupils' job prospects. It is in fact true that direct access to desired secondary high schools depends on success in the CEE. Then, at the end of a successful secondary career, students are likely to have good employment prospects. Teachers in general are deemed to have great concern in providing these social values for their scholars because, as they indicated previously, their success in teaching is mostly gauged on the basis of these concrete outcomes.

Q: T 21a

Table 4.29: Teachers' Views on Repetition in the CEE

Response	Total No. (N = 18)	Urban (N = 10)	Rural (N = 8)
Teacher encourages	11	5	6
The school encourages	3	1	2
Resits optional	3	3	-
Resits not encouraged	1	1	-

## Discussion

The views of the majority in favour of resits, which substantiates our expectations, are similar to those reported earlier from parents and heads. The small inter-regional

differences which appear show that teachers in both regions thought resits were very important indeed. Against these, only very small groups of teachers stated that it was the schools' prerogative to encourage repetition or that resits were optional while one urban teacher said no resits were encouraged in their school.

The views shown by the majority in support of resits seemed to be based on the evidence reported earlier, namely that it enhanced children's prospects in improving their performances in CEE, and thus qualify to enrol in a secondary high school. This optimism was portrayed in some of their responses:

Additional chance improves their grades.

Urban teacher

Further chance could enable them not to repeat their errors.

Rural teacher

We give them another chance to enter secondary school.

Urban teacher

It helps them perform better.

Rural teacher

Aside from these explanations, as mentioned earlier, the underlying rationale behind repetition seems to be society's tendency to project differential perceptions of the social values associated with attendance at secondary high schools and secondary technical schools respectively. Since most of these teachers were aware of these differentials which tend to favour secondary high schools, the majority tended to stress resits which would give children another chance to try and secure places in coveted high schools.

Apart from the issue of resits, we envisaged that teachers' instrumental orientation toward the CEE would be portrayed in the

support they gave to preparations for the examination in the form of organising extra practice drill classes either in their own homes, school or in pupils' homes. According to their responses to the question "Do you normally give extra tuition to children?" (see Appendix K), this assumption had a very strong support in both regions. They insisted that, without attendance at such practice lessons, children might not be able to satisfactorily perform in the CEE. According to their responses (see Appendix K), all urban teachers charged fees for their lessons whereas their rural colleagues did not, although it is usual for the latter to receive gifts from parents and pupils themselves. Therefore, besides their ardent desire to give children appropriate drills for the CEE, the financial attractions and similar gains associated with conducting the classes make teachers even more enthusiastic in running the lessons.

Q: T 15

Table 4.30: Teachers' Views on Factors that help Children to succeed in the CEE (Categories mentioned in free response: entries total more than N)

Response	Total frequency (N = 18)	Urban (N = 10)	Rural (N = 8)
Hard work	15	7	8
CEE materials	16	8	8
Home support	7	4	3
Good memory	7	3	4
Good teachers	3	1	2
Keenness in learning	2	1	1
Cleverness	2	1	1



## Discussion

Thus it is clear that teachers in general seemed to attribute children's success in the CEE to a number of different factors. However, the majority appeared to regard over diligence and the use of examination resources as the most powerful contributory factors, thereby confirming our supposition that their views on success in the examination would match their orientation toward it. In particular, these attributions resemble closely the kind of support given by the majority toward the examination as revealed earlier. As may be recalled, a great number of them were reported as organising practice classes for their children, for which success was dependent on pupils' hard work through constant drills and the use of CEE materials. And as indicated also, these factors are commonly cited as being crucial to success in the CEE because of society's perception that the examination is often difficult. They are also given much pre-eminence generally because of the belief that it is through the achievement of a satisfactory performance in the CEE that could enable children to secure places in the few popular secondary high schools. As may be observed from the findings, teachers in both regions subscribed to these views, as evidenced by lack of differences in the regional responses. The data thus show that teachers are likely to perceive the examination as being vital and problematic and thus requiring much preparation.

Apart from these major findings, a fairly high number of teachers also considered children's success in the CEE in relation to home support and good memory according to the data in Table 4.30. These views are complementary to those held by the majority on hard work and utilisation of examination materials. For example, those

who cited home support as enhancing success expected parents to encourage children to work very hard at home always. Likewise, as was observed previously, due to the rote-learning style likely to be encouraged in drill classes, the use of memory is always considered a potential aid for achieving success in these lessons. Largely because of these views, most teachers did not refer to their own personal circumstances as being vital to achieving success in the CEE; instead those related to children were cited by the majority, whereas a fairly high number of them also referred to home circumstances.

#### 4.7.4 Form One Pupils

Q: FP 12

Table 4.31: Form One Pupils' Views on the Importance of CEE

Response	Total % (N = 235)	Urban % (N = 191)	Rural % (N = 44)
High school entry	72	74	64
Knowledge	20	16	36
Better job prospects	5	6	-
Certificates	3	4	-

## Discussion

These findings appear to give support to the assertion that most of them would show higher instrumental orientation toward outcomes derived from the CEE. The majority, especially urban pupils, thought the most important value of the CEE was to enable individuals to have access to secondary high schools.

As noted also, a slightly higher number of urban children seemed to show more instrumentality towards access to secondary high school, certificates and jobs than children in the rural school. Although these differences were small, nevertheless they tend to give further support to the previous contention that, in general, urban areas relative to the rural area are more likely to express concern for the CEE because of the use of credentials in the region for job selection or training.

## Essay Data

Further evidence concerning Form One pupils' views on the value of the CEE emerged from their essay data. Unlike the sentence-completion test, essay writing exercises afforded pupils much more scope for expressing their opinions on the examination, especially its importance. In this regard, virtually all the essay scripts that were analysed mentioned access to secondary high schools as a primary significance of the CEE pass rate. In addition, entry to these schools was more associated with obtaining certificates and jobs than in their previous data, as indicated in Table 4.32.



Table 4.32: Percentage of CEE References in Each Category by Form One Pupils

Response	Total % (N = 235)	Urban % (N = 191)	Rural % (N = 44)
Better job prospects	51	52	47
Good certificates	43	42	47
Knowledge acquisition	6	6	6

### Discussion

Like the adult samples, the majority of these pupils had earlier stated in the first part of the chapter that primary education ill-prepared children for paid jobs. Consequently, most of them sought secondary high schooling on the basis of their belief that credentials usually awarded in these schools were in tune with modern sector employment demands. Ultimately they appeared to have had less concern for the educative function of schools. And as indicated, the views of urban and rural respondents on this matter did not vary much. Therefore, whereas previously the majority of pupils only stated entry into secondary high schools as the most important gain derived from the CEE, in contrast these latter results linked success in the examination more closely with securing jobs and certificates than with mere attendance at secondary schools. The following expressions taken from their essays help to shed more light on their perceptions towards these issues.

CEE is significant because if you pass, you will go to a high school. From there, you take 'O' Level and if you pass you go to college, then you will have a good job.

Urban pupil

If you do not go to a high school, you will not be able to have a job in The Gambia. And if you do not work, you are nothing.

Urban pupil

The importance of CEE is that when you succeed, you can go to a high school. Then you can have a job to benefit yourself and your family.

Rural pupil

It is important to go to a high school because if you stay at the primary school, you will not have a job because officers take only students with GCE passes.

Rural pupil

Q: FP 15

Table 4.33: Form One Pupils' Opinions on Factors that help Children to succeed in the CEE

Response	Total % (N = 241)	Urban % (N = 197)	Rural % (N = 44)
Hard work	74	76	68
Use of CEE materials	6	5	9
Private study attendance	5	5	7
Memorisation	3	3	5
Lesson comprehension	2	2	6
Unclassified data	10	9	5

### Discussion

A large majority seemed to ascribe success in the examination mostly to excessive hard work. These perceptions, coupled with pressures from their parents and schools, would thus have inspired them to value over diligence as the most potent

contributory factor to success in the examination. Furthermore, although very few actually made direct references to instrumental-oriented practices, for instance use of CEE materials, memorisation and practice class attendance, remarks made by most of the pupils in the group that favoured hard work, such as "Study hard by repeating your notes loudly many times"; "Revise the CEE work day and night"; "Study very hard each day with your teacher"; and "Keep on working very hard on examination work", tend to suggest a possible link between their views on hard work and the adoption of these practices. Therefore, the overall findings seem to suggest that pupils' ideas about achieving success in the examination might be related to the adoption in most schools of the typical instrumental modes of preparations. And, like their previous data, these attitudes were associated slightly more with urban samples than rural probably because of a wider usage of organised private tuition courses for the CEE in the former, as stated previously.

#### 4.7.5 Primary Six Pupils

Q: PPsc 10

Table 4.34: Primary Six Pupils' Opinions about the Importance of the Examination

Response	Total % (N = 353)	Urban % (N = 233)	Rural % (N = 120)
High school entry	63	65	59
Knowledge	27	26	29
Jobs	10	9	12



## Discussion

As predicted, the majority in both regions cited entry into secondary high schools as the main importance of the CEE. Against this, just a little over a quarter perceived the CEE's importance with reference to the knowledge it is supposed to provide for those being prepared for it. Compared to the Form One sample, these children, for whom the CEE is still in the future, view its importance rather more in terms of a generalised progress, while Form One saw it more simply as a means of getting themselves to where they were. These findings might be better explained in relation to children's views concerning job prospects for primary leavers which were discussed previously. As was observed, the discussion has highlighted especially the very poor employment prospects for primary leavers mainly because of a variety of constraints generally associated with primary leavers. Furthermore, lack of differences in the regional data indicates not only the great concern in the two regions for secondary schooling, but also (as stated earlier) employment problems for primary leavers seem to be universal in the country.

Q: PPAQ 3

Table 4.35: Primary Six Pupils' Opinions on doing Resits

Response	Total % (N = 359)	Urban % (N = 235)	Rural % (N = 124)
Yes	59	57	63
Not certain	14	17	8
No	27	26	29

## Discussion

The majority of children were prepared to rewrite the CEE if ever they were unsuccessful. In the main, children are less likely to show favourable attitudes towards resits only if they could not be accepted in repeater classes. These are usually the minority who have either repeated several times or are above the age acceptable for resits. Further analyses of the data in Table 4.35 (see Appendix L) show that most of those who answered 'No' to the above question had done the examination previously.

Children's willingness to resit the CEE is presumably reinforced by their own desires to achieve success in the examination and by parental pressure. One way in which this desire is portrayed is their enthusiasm in attending private tuition. For example, in response to a question on this issue (PPAQ 3) most of both urban and rural children said they were attending such classes (see Appendix M). Also, when asked to indicate who was likely to worry most if ever they did not succeed in the examination, about half referred to themselves, while over 40 mentioned their parents (see Appendix N). The overall results thus indicate that the majority would doubtless like to repeat if unsuccessful in their impending examinations.

Furthermore, the decision to undertake repetition was stressed by the majority of children in both regions, although slightly more in the rural sample; explanations for this have already been given.

Q: PPAQ 4

Table 4.36: Primary Six Pupils' Opinions on Factors that help Pupils succeed in the CEE

Response	Total % (N = 359)	Urban % (N = 235)	Rural % (N = 124)
Hard work	35	37	32
Comprehension	24	22	27
Selective studies	14	11	19
Rote-memorisation	11	11	14
Fortune	10	12	4
Cleverness	6	7	4

### Discussion

Pupils were asked to complete the preceding item by choosing only one from a list of alternative explanations given to them (see Appendix D). This restriction was adopted so that they would select the most important attribute they thought could influence success in the examination. Although they might associate success with several factors, it was thought each would pursue vigorously the particular practice thought most vital in achieving success.

Perhaps the main message revealed from their responses is that, in terms of both group and regional data, children did not appear to rate any particular variable as being uniquely potent in influencing success. Instead, the wide range of distributions seems to show they ascribed success in terms of a number of factors.



The main cause of these low ratings may not be their lack of faith in the variables concerned, but probably their belief that it was their combined utilisation that could lead to success. Also, the limited response space provided by the questionnaire device could have contributed to the low percentage scores. Based on these findings, our contention that the majority would associate success in the CEE with one particular instrumentally-oriented practice was unsubstantiated. This section concludes our survey of the respondent groups' attitudes and experiences of the CEE.

### SECTION 3

#### 4.8 Perceptions on Primary School Outcomes

The discussions to be presented in this, the final section of this chapter, examine the respondent groups' views on certain key issues pertaining to primary education. These are the main functions they are likely to envisage for primary schools and defining attributes they perceived as being related to a successful primary leaver. The main argument in these discussions is that the groups' expectations on both issues might be reflective of the use of the CEE at upper primary classes. In the following subsections, data obtained from investigating these issues in respect of each group will be discussed.

##### 4.8.1 Parental Sample

Q: P 4

Table 4.37: Parents' Views on the Functions of Primary Schools  
(Categories mentioned in free response: entries total more than N)

Response	Total frequency (N = 20)	Urban (N = 10)	Rural (N = 10)
Knowledge-related functions	10	5	5
Good behaviour	6	3	3
Secondary school preparation	6	4	2
Job preparation	4	1	3

## Discussion

Half of the respondents tended to perceive primary school outcomes non-instrumentally. But by examining the results in terms of maximising the CEE pass rate (secondary school preparation and job preparation) and maximising educational benefits for all (knowledge-related and good behaviour), it may be seen that their views divide equally between the two categories. Consequently, our expectation that the majority would express mostly attitudes related to maximising success in the examination was not supported. Apart from their responses on secondary school preparation, the views expressed in each region did not appear to vary.

The non-instrumental values reported above seem to be related to a long-established expectation that attendance at primary schools should in particular enable children to be literate, numerate, live amicably with others in communities and to function competently in their locality:

Primary schools must try to equip children with academic, social and moral education that enable them to be independent and efficient.

Urban parent

The school should be able to give children education that is relevant to the needs of children.

Rural parent

Teachers in primary schools must give them sound education and also train them to be respectful, honest, truthful and well-behaved.

Urban parent

On the other hand, respondents who perceived the major role of primary schools in terms of secondary school preparation and securing jobs emphasised the need for schools to provide education



that could enable children to transfer, especially to secondary high schools and thus be hopeful of getting good jobs:

Primary schools should ensure them [children] success in getting secondary education which will enable them to have good jobs.

Rural parent

I think primary schools should concentrate on helping children to have secondary education or else they will not get jobs.

Urban parent

The school must try to give the child education so that he can have a place at secondary and so get a job to help me and himself.

Rural parent

I feel that the primary school should be concerned with educating children so that they have secondary education and good posts in future.

Urban parent

These preceding extrinsic perceptions seem to emanate from parents' deep awareness about problems commonly experienced by primary leavers in the modern sector labour market.

Q: P 5

Table 4.38: Parents' Description of a Successful Pupil (Categories mentioned in free response: entries total more than N)

Response	Total frequency (N = 20)	Urban (N = 10)	Rural (N = 10)
Achieves concrete outcomes in school	14	7	7
Works very hard	5	2	3
Has acquired knowledge	5	3	2

## Discussion

Compared to their previous data, these findings are more instrumentally-oriented because the majority tended to perceive success in primary schools in relation to achievement with specific reference to examination success, as against a small number who mentioned non-instrumental values such as knowledge. The high rating given to achievement-oriented outcomes in both regions seems quite genuine as it is generally believed that children who fail to achieve scholastic success at the end of the primary school in terms of succeeding in the CEE are doomed to failure as far as securing higher educational and employment opportunities were concerned.

### 4.8.2 Primary School Heads

Q: H 3

Table 4.39: Heads' Views on the Functions of Primary Schools  
(Categories mentioned in free response: entries total more than N)

Response	Total frequency (N = 15)	Urban (N = 8)	Rural (N = 7)
Knowledge-related functions	9	5	4
Secondary school preparation	6	4	2
Good citizen-ship training	4	2	2

## Discussion

About half of the respondents referred to outcomes related to knowledge, contrary to our argument that most of them would express opinions on maximising the CEE pass rate. And as with parents, if we consider the results with reference to maximising the CEE pass rate (secondary school preparation) and maximising knowledge for all (knowledge-related and good citizenship training), their non-instrumental attitudes appear to be higher than before.

Therefore, despite the significance the CEE has for schools, teachers and pupils, and the support given to its preparations according to most heads, nevertheless they held on to the progressive-values commonly associated with primary schools. These attitudes appear to stem from their awareness that in general both society and the Department of Education expected them to stress instructions in those traditional values such as the provision of a solidly based academic background, moral and social education. Largely in fulfilment of these goals, most of them actually cited some of the values advocated in the primary curriculum which purport to maximise educational benefits for all children.

Now the functions of primary schools are to help children to be able to adapt themselves to the social conditions in which they have to find themselves. This should be academic, religious and social.

Urban head

Well primary schools I would say should educate children broadly and widely. They should be able to cope with life, mixing with people well so that when they reach secondary, they are able to go on well with work and others.

Rural head

Against these views, six heads referred to secondary school preparation as the main objective of primary schools. More of



these respondents in the sample were urban respondents who perhaps seemed very concerned about poor job prospects for primary leavers, possibly because of the low evaluation of education obtained from these schools. The views evinced by this group were stated by an urban respondent thus:

I believe primary schools should equip pupils with the right sort of education that will make them go to a high school. At the end of high school, they can hope to have a good job.

Urban head

Q: H 4

Table 4.40: Heads' Descriptions of a Successful Pupil (Categories mentioned in free response: entries total more than N)

Response	Total frequency (N = 15)	Urban (N = 8)	Rural (N = 7)
Achieves concrete outcomes in school	11	5	6
Has acquired knowledge	6	3	3
References to personal characteristics	2	-	2

### Discussion

Despite the views towards primary education revealed in the preceding discussions, the majority referred to a successful pupil as someone who has achieved material success in school in contrast to those who mentioned knowledge outcomes. Rather surprisingly, most of them made references to achievement in the CEE as the

principal factor that indicated success derived from primary school attendance. This evidence which was also noticed in the parental data gives firm support to our assumption.

Obviously, since the majority had stated earlier that the main function of primary schools was to imbue children with sound and relevant education, it was surprising that most of them restricted their definitions of a successful pupil to concrete rewards such as achievements in the CEE. The failure by the majority to sustain their previous views may arise from their perceptions concerning the significance of the examination especially for primary leavers. As revealed earlier, a higher number believed success in it greatly influenced children's job opportunities. Since children's success also enables the community, particularly parents, to rate schools as being good or successful, achievement motives superseded those for knowledge in their definitions in both urban and rural samples. The high rating shown for pupils' achievement in the regions is a further indication of the similarity of primary leavers' employment problems in urban and rural areas as well as their optimism that such problems could perhaps only be overcome through success in the CEE.

### 4.8.3 Primary Teachers

Q T 10

Table 4.41: Teachers' Views about the Functions of Primary School  
(Categories mentioned in free response: entries total more than N)

Response	Total frequency (N = 18)	Urban (N = 10)	Rural (N = 8)
Examination preparation	10	6	4
Knowledge-related function	7	3	4
Job preparation	5	2	3

### Discussion

Half expressed opinions related to the CEE. This instrumental view is greater if the responses are categorised respectively as with parents and heads; in which maximising the CEE pass rate (exam preparation and job preparation) is contrasted with maximising educational benefits for all (knowledge-related). Viewed in these categories, teachers seem to be more instrumentally-oriented towards primary school outcomes than parents and heads.

The great degree of concern exhibited in the data as regards secondary entry might be occasioned both by internal and external circumstances that usually impinge on teachers in respect of the CEE. As individuals charged with the responsibility of



preparing children for the examination, most of them were, as stated earlier, aware that success in the examination was vital to their social status and their children's careers. Consequently, the majority tended to rate preparations for the examination higher than instruction related to the prescribed primary syllabus. Their dispositions towards the CEE are further illustrated in the following statements which were characteristic of the responses given by the majority group:

The aim of the primary school is to help the child to go to a secondary school. Therefore the school should be well equipped with good teachers to help children so that they will pass their examination to go to a high school and from there pick up a job.

Urban teacher

Well, as yet I don't think I can see any particular function that primary schools should perform. Already, primary schools have been designated as examination centres. They operate from class five to class six and be thrown to class six to sit CEE.

Rural teacher

As a result of the great concern expressed for the CEE by the majority, references made to knowledge-related issues as important functions envisaged for primary schools were comparatively few as the data in Table 4.41 indicate. However, unlike the majority, respondents in this minority group stressed the provision of non-instrumental outcomes. Therefore, despite the usual pressures arising from demands for success in the examination, few were convinced about the desirability of fulfilling their traditional role as educators as well as their contractual obligations to the Department of Education which particularly stressed the importance of teaching which is likely to lead to acquisition of relevant knowledge. Some of their convictions were expressed thus:

I think the primary school should lay the foundation for future learning. They should encourage children to appreciate the local environment before moving to urban areas to learn.

Rural teacher

Primary schools should always help children to read and write, to be obedient and pious. Without these, they cannot function effectively or have regard for other people.

Urban teacher

Q: T 9

Table 4.42: Teachers' Descriptions of a Successful Pupil  
(Categories mentioned in free response: entries total more than N)

Response	Total frequency (N = 18)	Urban (N = 10)	Rural (N = 8)
Achieves concrete outcomes in school	13	7	6
Works very hard	5	3	2
References to personal attributes	3	1	2

### Discussion

It is clear that the majority defined a successful pupil in terms of outcomes that were basically instrumental, particularly achievements in the CEE. These findings seem to reveal a close relationship between the majority's perceptions on the role of primary schools and their attributions of success in respect of pupils who have completed primary. This correspondence has risen partly because of the explanations given at the end of the previous discussion which cited specifically the significance of the CEE for

the majority and for their children. Once again these discussions apply equally to both regions.

#### 4.8.4 Form One Pupils

Q: FP 16

Table 4.43: Form One Pupils' Views on Primary School Outcomes

Response	Total % (N = 235)	Urban % (N = 191)	Rural % (N = 44)
CEE preparation	68	70	60
Knowledge outcomes	27	24	40
Unclassified data	5	6	-

#### Discussion

These results indicate that the majority perceived school outcomes mostly through success in the CEE, with slightly more urban respondents than rural holding this view. This evidence was emphasised more in several responses given by pupils. Accordingly, primary schools should in particular be more concerned with the following:

To train pupils in order to pass CEE.

Rural pupil

To study how you can be in a high school.

Rural pupil

They should help children to enter a high school.

Urban pupil



For them to teach pupils who are ready to go to high school.

Urban pupil

For the schools to try so that children pass CEE to leave the primary school.

Urban pupil

Their preferences for entry into secondary emphasised in these comments seem to be understandable since their enrolment in the schools concerned was brought about through achievements in the examination. Furthermore, although no specific references were made to securing either certificates or jobs at the end of their courses, nevertheless their main objective in seeking places in the schools, especially those in the urban area where the use of credentials in the labour market is more apparent as indicated earlier, was to enhance their prospects in obtaining these facilities. This assertion seems to be valid according to their opinions concerning employment opportunities for primary leavers discussed in section one of this chapter. It may be recalled that the majority referred to lack of such prospects and also attributed it mostly to low status of educational achievements at the end of the primary. In consequence, strong desires for access to high schools tended to be prompted by their belief that it could provide better education and job facilities for them.

Against these views, a small group of just over a quarter stressed the need for primary schools to provide children with knowledge that might help them to be able to cope with work at secondary. It seems as if this view would be less likely to be expressed if it were not for the heavy demands experienced from their high school work in which learning geared towards the CEE

preparations such as repetitive drill lessons might have proved less helpful to the solution of their learning problems in school.

Q: FP 17

Table 4.44: Form One Pupils' Descriptions of a Successful Pupil  
(Categories mentioned in sentence-completion: entries total more than 100%)

Response	Total % (N = 235)	Urban % (N = 191)	Rural % (N = 44)
Passes examination	57	58	55
Studies very hard	28	26	36
References to pupils' personal characteristics	24	24	23
Unclassified data	6	7	2

### Discussion

In our previous discussions, achieving concrete outcomes featured most often in the descriptions of a successful pupil. Now, examination success, which seems to be the same, is being expressed by over three quarters of the respondents. Explanations for the emphasis on success in the examination have already been given, especially in the immediately preceding discussion. In the case of regional responses, the views expressed by urban and rural pupils differed only minimally. This similarity of views is not surprising because, as stated previously, society generally perceives primary pupils as failing if they are unable to cross over the examination bridge to high schools.

#### 4.8.5 Primary Six Pupils

Q: PPSC 7

Table 4.45: Primary Six Pupils' Views on School Outcomes (Multiple responses permitted: entries total more than 100%)

Response	Total % (N = 353)	Urban % (N = 233)	Rural % (N = 120)
Pass the CEE	74	71	80
Have knowledge	18	18	18
Secure future jobs	8	8	10
Unclassified data	4	5	2

#### Discussion

Compared to Form One pupils, Primary Six children were more expressive of concrete outcomes derived from schooling. Over four-fifths expressed these desires as against less than one-fifth who mentioned related outcomes. These instrumental attitudes towards the CEE were expressed by the majority of urban and rural children, thus indicating the significance of the examination for primary leavers' future educational and job prospects in both regions. However, unlike the Form One sample, slightly more rural children than urban ones referred to the CEE preparations. This desire seemed to arise from the rural region's relative disadvantage in obtaining higher success rate in the examination as well as shortage of high school provision as revealed earlier.



On the whole, most of the children tended to consider primary outcomes or the role of the schools more in relation to enabling them to be groomed for the examination instead of acquiring the knowledge emphasised in the curriculum.

These findings might be expected, especially in view of children's earlier responses. We recall in section one of this chapter that the majority thought primary leavers were unlikely to be able to secure 'good' jobs in the country. In section two there was also evidence concerning their instrumental orientation towards the CEE, particularly the belief held by the majority that access to high schools could enhance their careers.

Q: PPAQ 11

Table 4.46: Primary Six Pupils' Descriptions of a Successful Pupil  
(Categories mentioned in free response: entries total more than 100%)

Response	Total % (N = 359)	Urban % (N = 235)	Rural % (N = 124)
References to characteristics of a successful pupil	40	42	37
Achieves concrete outcomes in school	32	30	36
Works hard	26	22	24
Acquires knowledge	8	9	6

## Discussion

Compared to previous discussions on a successful pupil, especially the Form One sample, the results here are quite different. Apart from most of the responses being less instrumentally-oriented, references made to personal characteristics did not appear in Form One data. This might have been due to differences in task demand between the measuring instruments used in the two groups. Form One pupils were supposed to have acquired more language abilities compared to those of Primary Six. It was thought therefore that Primary Six respondents might be better able to handle a simple open-ended question instead of a sentence-completion item. Based on this expectation Primary Six pupils were given an open-ended question - 'Describe a successful pupil' - while those of Form One had a sentence-completion item - 'A successful pupil is ....'.

It appears, however, that the inclusion of words like 'describe' and 'successful' in the instruments could have brought about the differences. The manner in which the form of questions influences responses is, of course, a subtle phenomenon. If this effect is indeed present amongst the responses cited, the consequence would be for Form One respondents to have focused their descriptions of a successful pupil on school outcomes such as examination success, whereas Primary Six pupils directed theirs towards such attributes as obedient, helpful, lucky, famous, happy and punctual in class attendance.

These latter discussions conclude our investigations into the attitudes of various respondent groups on the major themes that were examined in this connection. An attempt will be made in the

final section to explore possible connections between some of the main results by closely comparing the views of the respondent groups. It is hoped that better insights into, and an illumination of, the main findings may derive from a series of inter-group contrasts.

There now follows a summary of the key findings discussed in this chapter.

The main results discussed at the beginning of Section I of this chapter seemed to suggest poor job prospects for primary leavers either in their own communities or in other parts of the country. Some of the less likely causes of these problems included the tender age of the leavers and employers' possible preferences for post-primary leavers, but most respondent groups cited the low status of education achieved at the end of primary school as the potential inhibiting factor. As was observed in the discussions, the respondent groups in both regions expressed these views. These results may seem worrying to the various respondent groups especially Primary Six children who at the time of collecting these main data were being prepared for the CEE. Another likely source of justification for worry derives from their responses to an item concerning the definition of a good job. The data reveal that the majority of Primary Six children were likely to regard a job as being good if it had attractions such as good pay, security of tenure and opportunities for promotion. Since such jobs may not be available to them because of the reasons given, they, parents, heads and teachers tended to show much optimism for the CEE.

These investigations were followed by assessing the views of the respondent groups on a number of issues concerning the CEE,



particularly the social values attached to it, support for its preparation and their perceptions on factors influencing its success. On the whole, the majority of respondent groups in both regions indicated that the CEE was beneficial to them, either in affording successful candidates places in post-primary schools or for serving as a gateway to children's future occupational careers. In addition, the majority of heads and teachers expressed the view that outstanding success in the CEE might enhance the community standing of teachers and schools as a whole.

The parental group in particular had in various ways justified their great concern for the examination through keenly involving themselves in its affairs. For instance, the majority said they had encouraged their children to pursue the full primary course with the object of gaining a place in secondary school rather than for the knowledge and skills likely to be acquired at the end of primary. In line with their strong expectations about the examination, the majority of parents said they would encourage their children to resit the CEE indefinitely, mainly because the examination was supposed to provide access to secondary schools for their children. This in turn might enable the children to get a good paid job in future and thus help to raise their social status in society. Apart from resits, parents stated other areas in which they gave assistance towards the examination, for example payment of study fees, organisation of home tuition (mainly by those who were literate) and provision of materials. This latter category of assistance was being provided by most parents.

The above-mentioned sources of help related to the CEE seem consistent with the parents' notion of success in the examination.

Hard work, often regarded as constant and long, tedious drills in and out of school daily on past examination materials, and the use of these resources ranked as the two most important attributes for success in the examination. Thus, these findings seem to suggest that most parents were likely to enforce the rule of hard work on their children in the CEE classes, and to try to purchase recommended examination materials. These perceptions were expressed in both regions, although the number was slightly higher in the urban than in the rural area.

Like the parental group, the majority of heads in both regions perceived the CEE as having several social and economic values. Success in it, as revealed, could probably uplift the community image of their schools and teachers, as well as the future occupational expectations of their children. In consequence, the majority agreed that they advised all their unsuccessful candidates to do the examination again so as to have entry grade to secondary. In line with their strong support for the examination, many heads, like the parents, thought that success in the examination depended mainly on hard work and the use of CEE materials.

Similar views on the CEE also emerged from teachers either in the rural or urban areas. The majority referred to such values as the enhancement of their community image and access to secondary school as two of the most significant results of the examination. Both the views of the majority on results and conceptions of success in the examination were like those held by the majority of heads.

The opinions expressed by children concerning their experiences of the CEE shed more light on the above findings. In both urban and rural areas, most of the respondents in Form One and

Primary Six samples indicated that the main importance of the CEE was to enable successful candidates to transfer to secondary schools. But, whereas a greater proportion of Form One sample believed success in the examination might be achieved through hard work, Primary Six on the other hand expressed that it probably depended on a series of factors. And, while the majority of Primary Six respondents seemed to have preferred results, Form One pupils did not refer to this issue when writing their essays. As explained earlier, the significance given to the CEE was attributed to the low standard of primary education which in turn seemed to inhibit leavers' chances in getting paid jobs.

Following the preceding investigations, the opinions of the respondent groups on outcomes associated with primary schooling and on success at the end of this level were examined. As indicated, the views held by the majority of parents and heads may be described as being idealistic while those of teachers and children were instrumental. It was observed that, because of the high instrumental outlook most parents and heads had for the CEE and, coupled with the likely employment problems primary leavers were believed to have in the labour markets, they might find it difficult to maintain their low aspirations towards primary school outcomes. Another possible evidence for this contention was that the majority of both urban and rural parents and heads perceived success at the end of primary mainly with reference to instrumental outcomes rather than with regard to knowledge and skills emphasised in the primary syllabus. Therefore, despite the modest views of the majority of parents and heads with regard to primary school outcomes, it seems



plausible to assert that most respondent groups might give more attention to the CEE work than to that of the primary syllabus.

The aforementioned summary has in particular highlighted the unfavourable prospects for employment in the country for primary leavers compared to secondary leavers. Part of the primary leavers' problem tended to be the employers' negative perceptions of primary school education and also the views expressed on the CEE and primary schooling generally by the majority of most respondent groups revealed instrumental attitudes. The overall results might militate against the application of those teaching and learning processes recommended for the upper primary curriculum. If these adverse effects were to exist, then it should be possible to see similarities or inter-connections amongst the views expressed by the majority in each group. Table 4.47 brings together the majority views of the groups on most of the key issues of this chapter. It excludes regional comparisons because there were few differences in these data.

The main findings compared in Table 4.47 reveal a number of connections between the respondent groups' opinions on the issues that were investigated. A high proportion in all the respondent groups indicated that there were no jobs available for primary leavers in their communities. In all the respondent groups, the majority attributed leavers' employment problems to perceived inadequacies in primary education. Also in all the respondent groups, the majority perceived the CEE instrumentally: and with the partial exception of parents and heads, most respondent groups had similar perceptions on the main functions of primary schooling. Not surprisingly, most of the respondent groups defined success at

Table 4.47: Summary of Most Frequent Responses to Key Issues in Each Group

Topic	Parents (N=20)	Heads (N=15)	Teachers (N=18)	Form 1 (N=241)	Primary 6 (N=359)
Non availability of local jobs for primary leavers	15 (Y)	11 (Y)	10 (Y)	50% (Y)	58% (Y)
Major constraint: status of primary education	15 (Y)	8 (Y)	10 (Y)	N/A -	86% (Y)
The importance of the CEE	16 (HSE)	11 (JP)	10 (HSE)	72% (HSE)	63% (HSE)
The main functions of a primary school	10 (K)	9 (K)	10 (HSE)	68% (HSE)	74% (HSE)
Conception of success at end of primary schooling	14 (A)	11 (A)	13 (A)	57% (A)	40% (PQ)

Notes:

Y = yes	K = knowledge
N/A = not available	A = achievement
HSE = high school entry	PQ = personal qualities
JP = job preparation	

the end of primary as an achievement-related orientation to school. Overall, there were more similarities than differences between the opinions of the respondent groups on these issues. The impact of some of these attitudes, especially those related to the CEE, in inhibiting the application of recommended instruction in upper primary classes will be investigated in the next chapter of this dissertation.

## CHAPTER 5

### ATTITUDES TOWARDS TEACHING AND LEARNING AT UPPER PRIMARY SCHOOL WITH REFERENCE TO THE COMMON ENTRANCE EXAMINATION (CEE)

#### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

The main aim of this chapter is to investigate the influence of the CEE on teaching and learning in the CEE classes. The argument being examined in the following discussions is that preparations for the examination ultimately affect recommended teaching and learning processes and the content of upper primary education. This proposition will be investigated by discussing the findings related to these issues derived from the respondent groups. Each section discusses the responses given by the samples; the questions themselves will be cited only when necessary.

This chapter is divided into three sections. It begins by assessing teachers' views on how preparations for the examination affect learning through distorting recommended teaching practices. In section two, pupils' own opinions of how the examination affects learning processes and outcomes at upper primary schools will be examined. The third section discusses the role of the examination in affecting the teaching and learning of subjects stipulated in the upper primary curriculum. This final section also presents a summary of the major findings obtained from the investigations. Before discussing any of these issues, it seems appropriate to describe briefly the main objectives and content of primary



education as well as various salient approaches and methods recommended for teaching and learning in schools. Following this, some of the prospects for teacher training and dissemination of educational innovations within the country will be briefly outlined.

## 5.2 THE PRIMARY SCHOOL CURRICULUM

### 5.2.1 Major Objectives

After independence, the primary curriculum became more closely associated with selection into post-primary schools. As indicated in Chapter 1, this move was meant to identify individuals for further schooling and training so that they might be deployed in various spheres of the modern sectors of the economy. Equally, since the economic activity undertaken by a large majority of the population is agriculture, provision of skills pertaining to agriculture and related activities was also stressed in the primary curriculum. These recommendations are provided in the Ten Year Plan (1976) which was cited earlier.

In prescribing specific objectives for the primary curriculum, the Plan makes references to three fundamental realities:

- a) for the foreseeable future agriculture will play a dominant role in the economic existence of this nation;
- b) all parents would wish their children to be equipped with basic skills when they complete a school course;

- c) both parents and pupils with these skills to be those that will be useful to them in the next stage of life.

In the light of these circumstances, the Plan advocates that primary education should cater equally for (1) pupils who will transfer to post-primary schools at the end of their schooling and (2) those who are to drop out at the end of primary. To achieve this dual aim, the Plan identifies several varying broad objectives for schools, viz. a) to develop the child's ability to think for himself; b) to help him to be able to solve his own problems; c) to enable him to be adaptable and resourceful; d) to enable him to follow his own interests; e) to assist in the building of his physique; f) to develop his mental and manual skills; and g) to enable him to know where to get the information and materials he wants.

#### 5.2.2 Content and Time Allocation

On the basis of these broad objectives, the curriculum designed for use in schools is as follows: 1) English; 2) Mathematics; 3) Religious Education; 4) Basic Science; 5) Social Studies; 6) Home Economics; 7) Local Languages; 8) Physical Education; 9) Arts and Crafts; and 10) Music.

The primary courses itemised above are accorded different weightings in the class timetable used in primary classes, reflecting the relative importance given to the subjects by the Department of Education. The amount of time prescribed for each subject by the CDC for early and late primary education is shown below (GG/ED, op. cit.: 3-5).

Table 5.1: Revised Primary School Subjects' Time Allocation

Subject	PRIMARIES 1 - 3		PRIMARIES 4 - 6	
	No. of lessons weekly	Time in minutes	No. of lessons weekly	Time in minutes
English	7	210	7	210
Mathematics	7	210	7	210
Religious Education	2	60	3	90
Science	5	150	7	210
Social Studies	4	120	4	120
Home Economics	3	90	4	120
Local Languages	7	210	3	90
Physical Education	3	90	2	60
Arts and Crafts	3	90	4	120
Music	2	60	2	60

Source: The Primary School Curriculum Reform Exercises, CDC, Gambia Government, 1982: 13.

The primary curriculum thus seeks to provide a ten-subject curriculum comprising 43 lessons, each lasting 30 minutes. The foundation courses of language and mathematics are given the most importance in all the classes. Second priority has been given to science-based and vocationally-oriented subjects and the proportion of these courses increases as pupils ascend the school. In order to enable primary leavers to acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes mentioned in the Plan, the CEE classes must endeavour to cover all the major areas of the curriculum. However, as the



discussions in the chapter hope to highlight, work concerning the examination subjects seems to have priority over those subjects that are not examined at the CEE (see Appendix O).

### 5.3 SOME OF THE SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES EMPHASISED IN TEACHING AND LEARNING IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS

Various recommendations on teaching and learning in primary schools have been formulated by CDC and incorporated in teachers' handbooks and in the current Ten Year Plan on Education (GG/ED, op. cit.). The recommendations particularly emphasise the need for the content, teaching and learning in schools to be related directly to the child's social environment. This proviso, which is based on acquiring education that is 'relevant' to children's needs, implies that teachers and pupils should be encouraged to participate in out-of-school activities such as educational tours and work on group projects. These exercises are considered vital in fostering cooperative learning and skills in observation, and in developing perceptual curiosity and inquiry learning in children.

In science and related subjects, schools are urged to treat such courses as being integrated, comprising basic science, agriculture, health and sanitation. Combined teaching and learning of these disciplines is said to be capable of equipping children with such skills as measuring, recording, classifying, experimenting and reporting various phenomena. Their acquisition is deemed highly necessary for the development in children of basic scientific

attitudes, knowledge and understanding, and for acquainting them with the ability to think and to solve problems.

With regards to social studies, much stress is placed on teaching and learning topics, for example the family, the community and the state in relation to their history, economy, religion, music, arts and similar cultural pursuits. When exposed to these situations, it is hoped that children might comprehend things better and appreciate their physical, social, economic and political environment as well as acquiring 'relevant' skills and attitudes that could enable them to develop social skills.

In English and local languages, teaching and learning related to objectives such as understanding, literacy and the development of communication skills are stressed. In mathematics, primary importance is given to the use of activities and teaching and learning approaches that help children to develop problem-solving skills, effective thinking and independent reasoning. Subjects such as music, arts and crafts and home economics are designed with the objective of helping children to nurture creative talents, independent learning attitudes, self-interest learning and resourcefulness. Teachers are thus urged to create appropriate opportunities in schools to enable children to make their own items, songs, articles and dishes using local resources. Experiences likely to emerge from these are believed to help children become equipped with knowledge and skills that they might utilise either in the execution of their daily activities in communities or to assist those going to secondary schools to be able to cope with work in their new schools.

#### 5.4 TEACHER TRAINING PROSPECTS AND DISSEMINATION OF EDUCATIONAL INNOVATIONS

As indicated in Chapter 2 of this dissertation, it is possible that pressures other than those arising from the CEE such as teachers' academic and professional orientation might contribute to distortions in primary education. Thus, despite the problems cited in Chapter 3 which prevented the consideration of these variables in this dissertation, nevertheless it seems necessary to outline briefly what facilities there are in the country for teacher training and the dissemination of educational innovations before examining specific distortions in education. The detailed teachers' personal profiles, described earlier, among other things referred to their academic status, professional qualifications and experiences (see Appendix C also). As revealed in that discussion over half were qualified, had attended a secondary school and had taught for at least five years.

Of those qualified, most of them had received their three-year training locally at Gambia's only teacher training college. Usually candidates for training courses must have at least the STLC and must also have taught as an unqualified teacher for one year, in addition to passing the entrance examinations. Attendance at the college exposed them to advanced academic and professional disciplines, including courses on foundation subjects, professional subjects and teaching methods. These courses lay strong emphasis on the application of progressive teaching practices in primary schools because, at present, the whole training programme



is concerned with producing primary school teachers. Additionally, a substantial component of the programme is devoted to teaching practice in primary schools and to the design and use of teaching aids. Apart from these regular courses, the college also serves as a venue for the evaluation and dissemination of innovations or reforms in education. Thus, at the completion of their training, the teachers concerned would have been provided with both academic and professional experiences, together with knowledge and skills that might facilitate the use of innovative teaching practices recommended in the primary curriculum.

Similarly, opportunities exist within the parameters of the educational system for providing basic professional induction courses for unqualified teachers. Individuals desiring to serve as auxiliary teachers must at least possess the requisite passes in the STLC. On being selected, the Department of Education, in collaboration with The Gambia's Teachers' Union (GTU), provides short pre-service training courses for them before assuming teaching assignments in schools. The duration of annual pre-service courses varies from four to eight weeks, while those for in-service courses range from two to six weeks. These courses are often based on topics such as foundation courses, methodology, classroom management, general principles of education and the design and utilisation of appropriate teaching aids. At the end of each course, participants are graded on the basis of grades earned from course work, and on the results obtained from their teaching practice demonstrations which are assessed by experienced tutors. By and large, it is difficult for participants whose final grades are below B to find employment with the Education Department as

unqualified teachers. Such induction courses enable auxiliary teachers to be acquainted with the professional expertise needed in teaching and managing their classes. They also provide opportunities for the transmission of educational reforms and current practices in education to would-be teachers and their tutors.

Apart from these professional training facilities, the Education Department, with the assistance of GTU and CDC as well as local professional organisations like the Mathematics Association, and the English Language Teaching Association, conduct seminars and workshops in various parts of the country for the dissemination of information relating to current approaches and developments in education, including those on pedagogy curriculum reforms and the introduction of new textbooks and other teaching materials designed by CDC. In the past most of these meetings were attended by both trained and untrained teachers. Proceedings emerging from such deliberations could be communicated to teachers largely because of the decentralisation of educational services throughout the whole country through the establishment of Regional Education Offices and by constant visits made to schools by travelling Education Officers. These delivery systems, coupled with the activities of the recently established educational support units such as the School Inspectorate Unit (SIU) and Teachers' Centres (TC) (see Chapter 6) and the use of mass media, enable reforms in education and issues specifically concerning teaching and learning in schools to be made available to teachers.

From what has been described so far, it appears as if the group of teachers interviewed had achieved satisfactory standards in

professional training and experience as far as teaching at the primary level was concerned. It is hoped that these experiences might facilitate the pursuit of recommended teaching practices in primary schools. Furthermore, the various channels of transmitting educational inputs referred to could help them to be aware of the existence of such practices together with the guidelines formulated for their application. Nevertheless, external demands imposed on them, especially those pertaining to the CEE, might frustrate their attempts either to apply such approaches or give full coverage to the primary curriculum. In the following discussions, various effects of this examination on the upper primary curriculum will be examined. In section 1, only the views of teachers and pupils are discussed, the views of all the respondent groups being presented in section 2.



## SECTION 1

### 5.5 EFFECTS ON PEDAGOGY

This section will examine the effect of the CEE in distorting some of the pedagogical practices cited previously which might in turn affect children's learning in the terminal classes at primary school. The main objective is to discuss teachers' opinions as to how preparations for the examination affect the use of such desirable practices. Based on teachers' perceptions of outcomes associated with success in the CEE, the usual concern shown by them for the majority of children to succeed in the examination, and the strong support given to its preparations generally, it was anticipated that the following effects might be noticeable in their classes:

- 1) selective distribution of teachers' attention to children likely to perform better in the CEE;
- 2) enforcement of competition amongst children rather than cooperation;
- 3) lack of strong emphasis in encouraging children to develop questioning attitudes;
- 4) failure to encourage the development of appropriate problem-solving skills;
- 5) more emphasis on rote-memorisation than on comprehension learning;
- 6) failure to foster the development of basic skills in creative learning.

The main results obtained from these investigations are discussed in the following subsections.

5.5.1     Selective Distribution of Teachers' Attention in Class

Qs: T4 a and b

Table 5.2: Selective Distribution of Teachers' Attention in Class

	Total No. (N = 18)	Urban (N = 10)	Rural (N = 8)
Slow ones	9	4	5
Clever pupils	8	5	3
Attends to all	1	1	-

Discussion

The above results in both regions do not seem to reveal any relationship between the attention children receive and their likelihood of success in the CEE; at least as far as we can tell from what teachers say they do. Also, explanations given by teachers for attending selectively to slow children may be described as being remedial and less directed towards enhancing children's success in the examination. The most common explanations were:

- They need constant guidance.

Rural teacher
- To ensure that the clever ones were not held up.

Urban teacher
- Those pupils take a longer time to understand.

Rural teacher

Bring them to the standard of those working fast.

Urban teacher

To make them work more satisfactorily like others.

Rural teacher

They always need more help in order to be able to do their work.

Urban teacher

Similarly, amongst respondents who gave special attention to clever ones, in both regions, only one had explained this practice in terms of trying to enhance success rates in the examination. The rest said it was necessary because those children were either cooperative, presented no behavioural problems in class, or could easily comprehend lessons taught to them in class.

These results do not seem to offer support to the previous proposition that the majority would concentrate more on children likely to perform better in the CEE. Thus, although only around 10% of the CEE candidates are likely to have places in coveted secondary high, there is no evidence that teachers concentrate their efforts on children near this fail or pass level. The evidence might be explained in terms of the desire of teachers to adopt a long-established pedagogical practice, also advocated by the Education Department, namely to offer extra help to pupils who are under-performing in school.



### 5.5.2 Enforcement of Competition in Learning

Qs: T6 a and b

Table 5.3: Teachers' Responses to the Question on Whether They Encourage Competitive Learning in School

	Total No. (N = 18)	Urban (N = 10)	Rural (N = 8)
Yes	14	7	7
No	4	3	1

Table 5.4: Teachers' Responses to the Question on Whether They Encourage Cooperative Learning in School

	Total No. (N = 18)	Urban (N = 10)	Rural (N = 8)
Yes	13	6	7
No	18	10	8

### Discussion

In both urban and rural samples the majority agreed to encouraging activities that generated competition amongst children in their classes. In general, teachers may be inspired to value competition not only because there are very few places available in high schools, but also, as stated earlier, because success in the examination is always deemed vital to their position in society. The following comments made by some of the teachers during the

interviews highlight the views expressed by the majority on the adoption of competition in their classes:

I encourage children to compete for marks because it is a means of making them work harder so as to pass the CEE.  
Urban teacher

Yes, I do, because in the case of the CEE we are competing for high marks. So if I start the competition now, that will help them really.  
Urban teacher

Well I think in the primary school, when you reach class six, the main concern is to get a high school place and that is competition. Therefore, they are being taught to compete for higher marks.  
Rural teacher

Yes of course I do encourage them to compete for marks. For example, I have a boy and a girl who are very good in mathematics. Normally what I do, if any one of them has the highest mark in mathematics, I give a present to the individual so that next time others will also try harder.  
Rural teacher

Their responses to question 6b seem to show that most of them, in both rural and urban samples, were encouraging children to learn from each other in class. However, other data suggest that the reality may be somewhat different. For example, almost all the teachers who mentioned cooperative learning said they encouraged it through organising group-oriented activities in which children participated and shared each other's ideas in executing tasks assigned to them. But, according to their responses to the question investigating the type of teaching method adopted by teachers (see Appendix P), only a few of them referred to the use of group teaching while the majority used the whole class teaching approach.

Therefore, on the basis of the overall findings discussed on competition and cooperation, it appears as if many teachers were less likely to emphasise the latter. The main obstacle for

achieving this objective seems to be the use of instrumental teaching devices in preparing children for the CEE which tend to be antithetical to the adoption of cooperative teaching in schools.

5.5.3     Development of Inquiry Learning

Q:    T 5

Table 5.5:   Teachers' Strategies in Encouraging Children to Develop Questioning Attitudes

	Total No. (N = 18)	Urban (N = 10)	Rural (N = 8)
Teacher-initiated strategies	14	8	6
Pupil-initiated strategies	4	2	2

Discussion

Table 5.5 summarises the major strategies indicated by teachers as attempts to influence children to ask oral questions in class. Those described by the majority as teacher-initiated in both regions were those for which teachers had to initiate questions rather than children themselves being inclined to ask questions. However, as the following comments which characterise their responses seem to show, these strategies might encourage children to respond to oral questions in class but are unlikely to help them to develop their own questions.



I ask those whose hands are up.

Rural teacher

I do this by asking oral questions.

Urban teacher

I spread questions to all pupils.

Rural teacher

Usually, I ask those who are very quiet.

Urban teacher

In contrast, the small group of teachers whose strategies were regarded as pupil-initiated referred to the use of devices such as group work. These were supposed to give children opportunities to ask each other as well as their teachers questions on topics discussed in such groups. Others cited attempts to make their lessons relevant, interesting and challenging so that children would be encouraged to ask questions on what interested them about their problems.

Interpretation of these results is fraught with problems because, as indicated earlier, most teachers said they were not using group teaching techniques. Furthermore, strict adherence to the CEE materials which are likely to be taught as practice lessons with less emphasis on teaching activities could hardly allow teachers to make their lessons relevant, interesting or motivate children to ask oral questions. Support for these views was provided in a response given by an urban teacher: "In fact, the lessons do not allow for oral questions". The overall results thus tend to suggest that, due to the demands of the examination, the majority in both regions are unlikely to adopt appropriate practices that might develop confidence and desire in children to participate actively in class by asking questions.

#### 5.5.4 Development of Problem-Solving Skills

Q: T 13a

Table 5.6: Teachers' Strategies in Developing Children's Skills in Problem-Solving

	Total No. (N = 18)	Urban (N = 10)	Rural (N = 8)
Give children mathematics problems to solve	14	9	5
Problem-solving encouraged after the CEE is taken	2	-	2
Use experiments and observations	1	-	1
Use objective tests	1	1	-

#### Discussion

These findings show that the only problem-solving activities the majority of teachers in both regions were likely to expose children to were thus related to mathematics. But the mathematic lessons referred to were not the ones in the primary syllabus but those of the CEE. The latter are quite capable of enhancing children's problem-solving abilities (see Appendix P) if they are taught properly although, unlike those in the primary syllabus, most of the items are not related to children's local environment. Apart from this shortcoming, in general the lessons are used more as practice or drill sessions rather than to provide opportunities for creative teaching activities.

Besides lessons in mathematics, few teachers referred to any other activity because, as will be seen in the final section of this chapter, such courses as science, social studies and practical subjects which seem to offer better scope for developing problem-solving skills relevant to both prospective secondary pupils and dropouts, are hardly touched before the CEE is taken. The majority's failure to utilise appropriate lessons in helping children to develop basic skills in solving problems either in class or in their local environment could possibly be explained in terms of their desire to adopt instrumental teaching in order to maximise children's success in the CEE. This in turn inspires both the urban and the rural teachers to devote most of their teaching activities to subjects taken in the CEE instead of those provided in the primary curriculum.

#### 5.5.5 Development of Comprehension Learning

Qs: T 13b and T 20

Table 5.7: Teachers' Strategies in Developing Comprehension Learning

	Total No. (N = 18)	Urban (N = 10)	Rural (N = 8)
English comprehension exercise	13	7	6
Group discussions	2	1	1
Good explanation	2	1	1
Use of visual aids	1	1	-



Table 5.8: Teachers' Views on the Use of Rote-Memorisation

	Total No. (N = 18)	Urban (N = 10)	Rural (N = 8)
Memorisation referred to	17	10	7
None	1	-	1

From Table 5.7 it can be seen that the majority of teachers relied mostly on giving children comprehension exercises derived from the CEE textbooks and past papers as an attempt to foster comprehension learning. However, because of the level of difficulty of such passages, children could only understand them where teachers had adequately prepared and presented their lessons supplemented with the use of relevant visual aids. But, as their responses show, most of them had actually de-emphasised these enlightened practices probably as a result of their preference for adopting examination-oriented teaching methods. The majority could only refer to the use of English comprehension exercises because those were the only lessons taught by teachers likely to promote comprehension learning. This was due to the fact that several of the subjects mentioned in the prescribed primary syllabus, e.g. English, social studies and science, which might help children to understand their lessons and environment properly are usually not taught at all before the CEE is taken.

Once again the main reason for the teachers' disinclination towards incorporating pedagogical practices perceived as progressive seems to be not so much their lack of professional competence but rather it could be explained in terms of pressures arising from the CEE.

Support for this view may be seen from the findings on rote-memorisation learning given in Table 5.8. With the exception of one rural teacher, all teachers agreed that rote-memorisation learning took place in their classes. Usually teachers and pupils tend to regard it as a short-cut to success in the CEE. Some of the topics rote-learned include mathematic tables and rules, spelling, nouns, adverbs and prepared essays. The use of these tactics was further highlighted in the statements given below:

Now in English they learn by heart opposites and words similar in meanings. In mathematics they cram their formulae in order to work their problems more easily.

Urban teacher

That is the mathematical tables and spellings. Sometimes some children cram the tenses and it is of great importance to them when in CEE.

Rural teacher

Usually, children learn by heart how to shade answers to multiple-choice questions and some rules in mathematics and in English. Sometimes we give them model essays and letters to study which come from past questions. These help them to do well in the examination.

Urban teacher

### 5.5.6 Teachers' Strategies in Developing Basic Creativity Skills

Q: T 13c

Table 5.9: Teachers' Strategies in developing Creativity Skills

	Total % (N = 18)	Urban % (N = 10)	Rural % (N = 8)
Lesons on creativity taken after the CEE	11	5	6
Arts and Crafts	7	5	2

### Discussion

As predicted, the majority of teachers, especially those from the rural region, suspended teaching and learning of lessons purporting to develop children's skills in creativity until after the CEE was taken. But in reality, the end of the CEE in April or May each year marks the termination of the school year in Primary Six classes as far as teaching and learning are concerned. Therefore, contrary to the demands made in the primary curriculum for the production of such skills, most teachers are unlikely to provide such experiences for their children due to adopting a predominantly examination-oriented programme. Their great enthusiasm for adopting this mode of instruction was expressed by several of them, for example:



Presently, I am concentrating on subjects for CEE. It is only after the examination that I will concentrate on these other subjects.

Rural teacher

I have not yet been dealing with that since I am dealing with mathematics and English to solve CEE problems.

Urban teacher

At the moment, definitely we are on CEE syllabus and you know we have to stick to what is coming in the examination. So I think that will be done after CEE.

Urban teacher

Against this finding, as the preceding data also indicate, about half the teachers, mostly in the urban sample, referred to the use of arts and crafts lessons as a means of helping children to develop skills in creative learning. But the main problem with this evidence is that those concerned were less likely to give due attention to the teaching of such lessons given the huge demand experienced in respect of the CEE. We shall later refer to the evidence in support of this assertion. Therefore, based on the overall data on creativity, it may be concluded that pressures arising from the CEE might be so powerful as to prevent most teachers from pursuing the goals 'relevant' to the enhancement of creative skills in children.

## SECTION 2

### 5.6 EFFECTS ON CHILDREN'S LEARNING

#### 5.6.1 Introduction

The following discussions are concerned with assessing the views of Form One pupils and Primary Six children as to how the CEE affects both the learning process and outcome. In particular, its effects will be examined in relation to distortions on some of the advocated practices cited at the start of this chapter. The topics to be assessed are in the main those indicated earlier in the teachers' discussion, for example: a) inter-individual competition in class; b) problem-solving learning; c) comprehension learning; d) the use of rote-memorisation in learning; and e) examination anxiety.

### 5.7 FORM ONE PUPILS

#### 5.7.1 Competitive Learning

Qs: FP7 and FP6

Table 5.10: Percentage of Pupils selecting Each Reaction to receiving Poor Grades (Multiple responses permitted: entries total more than 100%)

	Total % (N = 235)	Urban % (N = 191)	Rural % (N = 44)
Feel sad	47	46	52
Compete by working harder	31	31	32
Become angry	20	20	18
Feel ashamed	9	9	9
Become jealous	6	5	4
Ask the other child to explain work to me	4	4	5
Accept it	3	3	2
Unclassified data	3	3	5

Table 5.11: Form One Pupils' Views of Teachers' Reaction to Poor Grades

	Total % (N = 235)	Urban % (N = 191)	Rural % (N = 44)
Becomes angry	40	41	43
Punishes the child	23	24	18
Explains work further	15	16	11
Encourages the child	10	9	14
Gives warning	9	8	9
Unclassified data	3	2	5

### Discussion

Table 5.10 does not appear to show the high incidence of competitive learning anticipated from most pupils, since less than half indicated a competitive spirit. Nevertheless, apart from minority views such as "Ask the other child to explain work to me" and "Accept it", the rest were more likely to generate cooperative learning. In Table 5.11 the only opinions expressed likely to create competition rather than cooperative learning were, for instance, "Explains work further" and "Encourages the child". These responses, however, were made by only a few respondents, with the majority of the responses more likely to bring about competition in learning. In general, pupils' preference for competition is based on the problems involved in securing the few coveted places in secondary high schools. As indicated earlier, attendance at the schools is believed to enhance their secondary schooling and



employment prospects. Absence of real regional differences on these issues shows the significance of these outcomes for primary leavers in both regions.

### 5.7.2 Problem-Solving Strategies

Q: FP 4

Table 5.12: Form One Pupils' Responses to, "If I come across a problem that is difficult to do, I ----".

	Total % (N = 235)	Urban % (N = 191)	Rural % (N = 44)
Seek others' help	84	83	85
Skip it	10	11	9
Guess solution	3	2	4
Try out solution	2	2	2
Unclassified data	1	2	-

### Discussion

Almost all the responses in the group as well as in the regional samples mentioned the use of strategies that might not help children to develop the problem-solving skills advocated in the primary curriculum. The predominant practice concerning pupils' desire in presenting their problems to others for possible solutions seems to derive from both the content and style of instrumental teaching and learning in examination classes. As will be seen later on, many of the primary school subjects with higher potential

for developing desired skills in problem-solving are not covered before the CEE is taken. Additionally, since most of the lessons taken by pupils in school and those also organised in school in the afternoons as extra classes are treated as practice classes in which teachers could attend readily to their problems, the majority in the urban and in the rural sample were encouraged to rely on others, especially teachers, to sort out their problems. Lack of regional differences shows the uniformity in both regions as regards both content of what is normally taught in examination classes as well as procedures adopted for teaching and learning. These findings therefore tend to suggest that most pupils might not prefer to use appropriate problem-solving devices largely as a result of the adoption of an exam-oriented schooling.

### 5.7.3 Comprehension Learning

Qs: FP 3 and FP 5

Table 5.13: Strategies adopted by Form One Pupils for Understanding Their Studies

	Total % (N = 235)	Urban % (N = 191)	Rural % (N = 44)
Repeat it several times	67	70	55
Memorise it	9	8	13
Show keen interest in it	8	8	9
Make use of the information	6	6	7
Unclassified data	10	8	16

Table 5.14: Strategies adopted by Form One Pupils for Retaining Information

	Total % (N = 235)	Urban % (N = 191)	Rural % (N = 44)
Repeat it many times	60	59	64
Memorise it	25	28	11
Make use of the information	7	7	9
Try to understand it	2	2	2
Unclassified data	6	4	14

### Discussion

In both sets of data, the first two responses may be regarded as measures that are unlikely to aid comprehension and retention in learning, while the other two might achieve these objectives. If the results were placed into these categories, it may be argued that the strategy favoured by most pupils, which was frequent repetition of what was learnt or studied, could hardly enable them to retain and understand their lessons. As cited in the previous discussion, extensive use of these strategies, which may be noticed in both regions, appears to be related to the exam-oriented pattern of schooling that dominates the termination classes. Under such circumstances, they tend to believe that they could learn and retain lots of information for future use in the examination by spending several hours on merely repeating such pieces of information.



#### 5.7.4 Rote-Memorisation Learning

Qs: FP 4 and FP 2

Table 5.15: Form One Pupils' Responses to, "In class, we learned the following by heart ----".

	Total % (N = 235)	Urban % (N = 191)	Rural % (N = 44)
Memorisation referred to	76	77	75
References to the importance of memorisation	13	14	10
No keen interest in it	8	7	9
Unclassified data	3	2	6

Table 5.16: Explanations offered by Form One Pupils for liking Multiple-Choice Items

	Total % (N = 235)	Urban % (N = 191)	Rural % (N = 44)
They are easy to do	60	61	57
They help in solving problems	26	26	23
Don't like them	6	5	11
Unclassified data	8	8	9

#### Discussion

In Table 5.15, the opinions held by the majority on the use of memorisation tend to corroborate the suggestion that this type of

instrumental learning was likely to gain much popularity amongst pupils. As with teachers, items cited by pupils as being rote-learned were mathematical formulae, English words and phrases and prepared essays. Additional evidence on this issue may be seen from Table 5.16 from which it can be seen that the majority seemed to have liked doing multiple choice items because they were easier to work compared to others. This view was entertained by the majority of urban and rural respondents although the former did somewhat less. Some of the respondents emphasised their liking for such items thus:

I like doing multiple-choice items because my eyes will be on the answers and I wouldn't get any mistake.

Urban pupil

I like doing multiple-choice items because if I cannot work any problem, I guess it and get it right.

Rural pupil

I like doing multiple-choice items because I can prove my answer when it is correct or wrong.

Urban pupil

I like doing multiple-choice items because it is simpler to think and quicker to do.

Rural pupil

Also in Table 5.14, over a quarter cited the significance of memorisation but without stating that it was being practised. In particular, they referred to its value in enabling them either to obtain good grades in class or in enhancing their performances in class. The views expressed above may seem to be erroneous given that multiple-choice questions are not inherently easier to tackle than other types of questions. Moreover, one of the ILO studies mentioned earlier (ILO/JASPA/WA, op. cit.) among other things reveals that the solution of most of the 1978, 1979 and 1980 CEE papers would require the use of such skills as understanding and

application rather than simple recall of information. However, children's perceptions seem to derive from the pattern of teaching and learning adopted in Primary Six classes which are mostly practice-oriented as well as from their passionate desire to try to use techniques that might enhance their success in the examination. These circumstances are likely to inhibit any attempts made by them to comprehend their lessons either in school or at home.

#### 5.7.5 Examination Apprehension

Q: FP 9

Table 5.17: Form One Pupils' Responses to, "During examinations I become ----".

	Total % (N = 235)	Urban % (N = 191)	Rural % (N = 44)
Become happy	42	43	34
Feel nervous	30	29	30
Become confused	18	17	23
Unclassified data	10	11	13

#### Discussion

None of these responses seems to indicate that the majority had experienced any intense anxiety at the time they were doing the CEE. In view of the great importance they were likely to have for the examination, the results, especially references to happiness,



are indeed surprising. However, this evidence may be explained in terms of the sample's being already enrolled in desired secondary schools rather than failure to experience anxiety while doing the examination: these were the children who had won through the CEE ordeal.

On the other hand, taking together the rest of their responses, about half were apprehensive during the examination. More rural respondents in contrast to those in the urban group cited this, possibly because, as shown in Section I of Chapter 3, uncertainties about access to secondary high schools are greater in the former region given that there are relatively few post-primary school facilities. Thus, despite the top rating given to happiness, the proposition that pupils might express anxieties for the examination was supported in part. This was more likely to be the case because, as indicated earlier, there is always keen competition in schools for achieving success in the examination.

## 5.8 PRIMARY SIX PUPILS

### 5.8.1 Competitive Learning

Q: PPLSQ 4

Table 5.18: Primary Six Pupils' Responses to, "I do not normally discuss problems with my friends in class"

	Total % (N = 359)	Urban % (N = 235)	Rural % (N = 124)
Yes	48	44	55
Not certain	36	35	38
No	16	21	7

### Discussion

These results, which seem to provide partial support for our argument, do not appear to indicate a willingness by the majority to encourage cooperative learning as an attempt to solve their problems. Support for this finding would have been greater if it were not for a fairly high number of children who were undecided. Explanations for lack of enthusiasm to adopt collaborative learning to conquer their problems in class were given in the previous discussions. In general, such practices provide for individual effort and excellence as opposed to those of groups. The former strategies, which are often believed to bring about achievements in the CEE, ultimately result in inter-individual competition in the respective classes. With regard to the regional

responses, slightly more rural children than urban ones indicated a preference for non-cooperative learning. These findings may be explained with reference to the relative advantage urban children tend to have over their rural counterparts in gaining access to secondary schools (as stated previously). Thus, as with the Form One sample, pressures arising from the CEE might possibly motivate most Primary Six children not to regard the use of collaborative learning devices as likely potential means of overcoming learning problems in school.

#### 5.8.2 Problem-Solving Strategies

Q: PPSC 4

Table 5.19: Primary Six Pupils' Responses to, "If I come across a problem that is difficult to do, I ----".

	Total % (N = 353)	Urban % (N = 233)	Rural % (N = 120)
Seek help from others	79	80	78
Skip it	12	10	15
Become discouraged	5	5	4
Try to solve it	4	5	3

#### Discussion

Therefore, when faced with a learning problem in class, only a very small proportion of children might exert individual initiatives to find out solutions. In comparison, the majority



would seek help from others for them to try and solve such problems on their behalf. Some of the responses offered by children give a further indication of their preferences for referring their problems to others for possible solution:

I ask my teacher or someone else who has been to school.  
Rural pupil

I call the attention of my teacher immediately.  
Urban pupil

I would just pass that question to my teacher for help.  
Rural pupil

I just go and hand it to my teacher and she will solve it for me.  
Urban pupil

I will always ask my teacher or somebody who knows it.  
Rural pupil

I will go to my sister or our teacher and they will explain it for me.  
Urban pupil

Clearly the 'others' are always older 'experts' rather than classmates; their action is one of seeking answers rather than seeking assistance to come to their own solutions, or cooperation from fellow students.

These findings, which gain much support in each region and first emerged from the Form One sample, were explained earlier in terms of strict adherence in Primary Six classes to the CEE work which provides less scope for children to engage in activities that might develop appropriate problem-solving skills. Under such circumstances, the first three strategies described in the preceding table are likely to be stressed more than learning devoted to solving problems relevant to them, especially those related to their immediate surroundings. The overall results therefore seem to provide strong support in favour of the argument that most children

in both regions would exhibit instrumental-oriented problem-solving strategies rather than those advocated in the primary curriculum probably as a result of demands imposed on them by the CEE.

### 5.8.3 Comprehension Learning

Qs: PPSC 3 and PPSC 5

Table 5.20: Strategies used by Primary Six Pupils to Understand Their Studies

	Total % (N = 353)	Urban % (N = 233)	Rural % (N = 120)
Repeat it several times	69	70	66
Memorise it	20	20	21
Learn it properly	3	3	4
Make use of information	6	6	7
Unclassified data	2	1	2

Table 5.21: Strategies used by Primary Six Pupils to Retain What They Learn

	Total % (N = 353)	Urban % (N = 233)	Rural % (N = 120)
Repeat it several times	57	55	60
Memorise it	30	32	27
Make use of information	7	7	8
Understand it	6	6	5

## Discussion

The majority of responses in each table referred to practices unlikely to secure retention and comprehension of learning material. This evidence becomes strengthened if the results are considered as those responses likely to achieve these objectives and those that might not. It then becomes more clear that in both regions most children cited responses that could be regarded as unproductive in attaining these objectives. Once again, it may be reiterated that children's preferences for relying on repetition and memorisation as aids to comprehension learning tend to stem from their belief that the use of such tactics might maximise their success in the CEE. On the whole, the significance usually given to success in the examination, results in the adoption of these practices in most parts of the country.

### 5.8.4 Rote-Memorisation Learning

Qs: PPSC 12 and PPSC 2

Table 5.22: Primary Six Pupils' Responses to, "In class we learn the following by heart ----".

	Total % (N = 353)	Urban % (N = 233)	Rural % (N = 120)
Memorisation referred to	72	74	68
References to importance of memorisation	16	18	13
None	12	8	19



Table 5.23: Reasons given by Primary Six Pupils for liking Multiple-Choice Items

	Total % (N = 353)	Urban % (N = 233)	Rural % (N = 120)
They are easy to do	78	77	80
They help in solving problems	14	15	13
Don't like them	4	5	4
Understand it	4	3	3

### Discussion

The use of rote-memorisation learning is indicated in these results. In Table 5.22 the majority of group and regional samples mentioned its use. Most of the topics mentioned as being memorised were similar to those cited previously by Form One respondents. These were mathematic formulae and procedures involved in solving mathematic problems, words, model essays and letters. In general, children are keen to adopt these measures in practice classes held in schools. They give encouragement to their adoption as a way of enhancing their prospects of passing the examination. What actually seems to make children more enthusiastic about trying to memorise bits of information on the CEE seems to be their belief that questions and items similar to the ones rote-learned might reappear in future examination papers and thus enable them to perform better.

The results provided in Table 5.23 give additional evidence for children's appreciation in using rote-memorisation in learning.

Most of them tended to favour multiple-choice questions merely because they thought such items could be solved more easily than others. As with the Form One group, they referred to the presence of alternative answers that gave them the chance to guess correct responses, and also to the mere recall of items learnt previously when solving such problems. Similarly, in response to a question related to pupils' attitudes towards multiple-choice items, most of the teachers stated that pupils enjoyed doing such exercises (see Appendix R). Altogether, findings discussed on rote-memorisation provide further evidence for the suggestion that preparations for the CEE might affect comprehension learning in both regions.

#### 5.8.5 Examination Apprehension

Qs: PP LS 1 and PP LS 2

Table 5.24: Primary Six Pupils' Responses to, "I often study most when the test is near"

	Total % (N = 359)	Urban % (N = 235)	Rural % (N = 124)
Yes	63	61	66
Not certain	24	23	27
No	13	16	7

Table 5.25: Primary Six Pupils' Responses to, "Class tests make me confused and sad"

	Total % (N = 359)	Urban % (N = 235)	Rural % (N = 124)
Yes	47	45	51
Not certain	38	38	39
No	15	17	10

### Discussion

The findings in the Yes-response in Table 5.24 show that the majority might do serious studies only in anticipation of class tests. This view, equally held by urban and rural respondents, seems to indicate the presence of higher test awareness and perhaps anxiety amongst children. From these results it appears most of them are likely to exhibit an even greater degree of apprehension for the CEE since the examination is much more valued than class tests.

The Yes-response in Table 5.25 also indicates children's anxieties towards examinations since about half stated that class tests might create confusion and unhappiness for them. These results do not necessarily mean they might not experience emotional instabilities while writing such tests in class. Instead, the low response rate may be attributed partly to a fairly high number of children who were undecided on this issue. This section concludes the discussion concerning the effects of the CEE on learning.



### SECTION 3

#### 5.9 EFFECTS ON THE PRIMARY CURRICULUM

##### 5.9.1 Introduction

The main argument being assessed in this section is that parents, heads, children and teachers might all contribute to the schools' failure in teaching and learning the recommended primary school subjects in the terminal class of primary. This failure may be attributed to circumstances related to the CEE, particularly perceptions of its social outcomes which are likely to inspire schools to concentrate their work mostly on courses provided in the examination rather than the full range of those in the primary curriculum. In the following discussions, an attempt will be made to assess how the respondent groups influence such distortions.

#### 5.10 PARENTAL GROUP

Qs: P2 a, b and c

Table 5.26: Parents' Responses to, "Do you know the subjects that your child takes in school?"

	Total (N = 20)	Urban (N = 10)	Rural (N = 10)
Yes	16	9	7
No	4	1	3

Table 5.27: Parents' Responses to, "Would you like him/her to study other subjects?"

	Total (N = 16)	Urban (N = 8)	Rural (N = 8)
Yes	2	-	2
No	8	4	4
Only after the CEE	4	3	1
The child decides	2	1	1

Table 5.28: Reasons Why Children might not take Additional Courses in School

	Total (N = 16)	Urban (N = 8)	Rural (N = 8)
Timetable full	12	5	7
Children dislike it	4	3	1

### Discussion

The results shown in Table 5.27 reveal that the majority of parents in both regions knew the subjects taken in school by their children. In contrast, a small group of respondents (who were mostly non-literate) had no such knowledge. The view held by the majority, especially their references exclusively to the CEE subjects learnt in school by children, may be explained within the context of both their concern for the examination and how it might influence them to distort the primary curriculum.

Additional support for this latter view obtains from the data in Table 5.27. Of the parents supposedly aware of what their children were learning in school, half did not appear to want them to do additional courses. This evidence, together with the opinion expressed by a quarter of the sample, who could only approve the introduction of new subjects after the CEE was taken, and the data in Table 5.28, seem to show that the majority disapproved of children taking additional courses because they were convinced that they already had enough CEE work to cope with. Overall, our arguments seem to be confirmed because it appears as if most parents were likely to disapprove the recommended coverage of the primary curriculum in preference to the CEE work. This assertion seems tenable for both the regional groups given the absence of noticeable differences in their views on these issues.

Qs: P3 b and 3

Table 5.29: Parents' Responses to, "Did you buy any books for your child this year?"

	Total (N = 20)	Urban (N = 10)	Rural (N = 10)
Yes	17	9	8
No	3	1	2



Table 5.30: Types of Books purchased by Parents

	Total (N = 17)	Urban (N = 9)	Rural (N = 8)
CEE	15	8	7
Non CEE	2	1	1

### Discussion

Both the group and the regional data in Table 5.30 indicate that the majority were providing books for their children. The willingness expressed by most parents in this regard was indicative of the belief held in the communities and in schools that children's success in the CEE depended on the use of examination books including past papers. Largely because of this, a high number of parents providing such resources referred to books related to the examination. These results confirm the assertion made in the previous discussion concerning the majority's desire to give less emphasis to non-examinable courses as a result of outcomes associated with success in the CEE.

## 5.11 PRIMARY SCHOOL HEADS

Q: H2 a and b

Table 5.31: Heads' Views on whether there were Differences in Subjects taught in Primaries Five and Six

	Total (N = 15)	Urban (N = 8)	Rural (N = 7)
Yes	12	7	5
None	3	1	2

Table 5.32: Heads' Views on whether there were Differences between Textbooks used in Primaries Five and Six

	Total (N = 15)	Urban (N = 8)	Rural (N = 7)
Yes	11	6	5
None	4	2	2

### Discussion

As can be seen from Table 5.31, most heads in both regions agreed that there were differences between the subjects being taught in Primaries Five and Six respectively. According to their responses, subjects which are not examined in the CEE were not available in Primary Six. Likewise, there were differences between the textbooks used in Primaries Five and Six respectively as revealed in Table 5.32. The majority of heads in both regions who

expressed this view indicated that only CEE manuals were being used in Primary Six; thus the textbooks designed for schools by the Department of Education were neglected.

Q H8

Table 5.33: Heads' Views on Activities undertaken by the CEE Classes after the Examination

	Total No. (N = 15)	Urban (N = 8)	Rural (N = 7)
Try to cover primary syllabus	14	7	7
Work continues as before	1	1	-

Thus, apart from one urban head, all the rest admitted that teachers and children normally strive to pursue the prescribed primary course after the CEE had been held. This indicates that subjects other than those taken in the CEE would be discarded in both regions prior to writing the examination so as to fully cover the syllabus. Some of the responses made by heads give emphasis to organising such post-examination activities in schools:

Well, normally after CEE, because they have missed a lot of other subjects like social studies, health science and history, so instead of the commonly known two subjects, they do other subjects to make sure children do a little bit before proceeding on to high school.

Urban head

After CEE, subjects that were left behind are the ones children learn because if they leave with only knowledge of CEE subjects, we are creating a big problem for them at their secondary schools.

Rural head



Children do subjects like social studies, science, literature and the teacher introduces a bit of French. And sometimes they go on visits and the teacher will also invite outsiders to give them a talk.

Urban head

However, as explained before, the CEE is usually held between April and May each year. Thus there is hardly sufficient time left in which to cover the courses cited above, given that the school session ends in June. Therefore, in most schools, the end of the examination signals the end of any active classroom instruction. Instead the general practice is for schools to engage children in activities like games, singing or debates provided there is no high rate of absenteeism since the majority are likely to perceive themselves as leavers. Because of these circumstances, the schools are unlikely to be able to concentrate on work on the upper primary curriculum.

Q: H 11b

Table 5.34: Heads' Responses to, "Does the CEE sample adequately the aims and content of primary education?"

		Total No. (N = 15)	Urban (N = 8)	Rural (N = 7)
Yes	2	1	1	
No	13	7	6	

### Discussion

The view expressed by the majority in both regions reflected their apparent admission that papers set for the examination, as

well as processes involved in preparing children for it, were unrelated to the principal objectives enunciated for primary schools. Obviously, as heads of schools, they were responsible for determining what was taught in various classes in their schools. Equally, some of them were members of committees responsible for designing the CEE questions. Therefore, their knowledge concerning the disparity between primary school objectives and those of the examination could hardly be doubted. The disparity had arisen probably because schools tended to disregard those subjects not in the CEE. Based on the evidence so far given by heads, it seems that concern for the CEE, in urban as well as in rural samples, was affecting such aspects of the primary school as subjects, textbooks and major goals.

## 5.12 PRIMARY TEACHERS

Qs: T1 a and b

Table 5.35: Teachers' Responses to, "Do you give children homework to do?"

	Total No. (N = 18)	Urban (N = 10)	Rural (N = 8)
Always	14	7	7
Occasionally	2	2	-
Never	2	1	1

Table 5.36: Subjects on which Homework is based

	Total No. (N = 16)	Urban (N = 10)	Rural (N = 6)
CEE subjects only	14	8	6
CEE and others	2	2	-
Others only	-	-	-
None	-	-	-

### Discussion

Usually teachers in charge of preparing children for the CEE give much attention to the administration of homework. Other than practice classes conducted in schools in the afternoons, pupils' homework ranks as the second most important means for covering the entire examination syllabus. Significance for this may be gleaned from both the regional responses given in Table 5.35 in which a substantial majority referred to its use. The impact of these exercises in affecting the primary curriculum is also noted in Table 5.36 where it is evident that most of them cited mainly CEE subjects rather than those in the primary syllabus when giving homework to children. This exclusive use of examination materials is attributable to the desire of teachers in both regions to complete the syllabus in advance of the examination.



Qs: T2 a, b and c

Table 5.37: Teachers' Responses to, "How many times a week do you use tests in class?"

	Total No. (N = 18)	Urban (N = 10)	Rural (N = 8)
Once a week	14	7	7
Twice a week	4	3	1

### Discussion

All the teachers had been conducting testing in their classes at least once a week. The use of such tests could have a series of advantages such as discovering weaknesses in teaching and learning or for evaluating the success or children's mastery of the lesson. However, their responses to questions T2b and T2c (see Appendix S) show that the majority of teachers designed internal test items on the CEE format and these were given to evaluate progress made by children towards preparations for the examinations rather than to monitor progress on work concerning the primary syllabus. These strategies are usually adopted in order to familiarise children with the content, format and processes involved in tackling real examination papers, and thereby to enhance their success rates. A rural respondent teacher aptly explains the strategy:

I give pupils tests so that they will be acquainted with the way of doing the examination. ... Some of them tend to have problems with the examination, so we give them tests so that they have enough practice on how to do the examination.

Q: T 16

Table 5.38: Teachers' Responses to, "Are there subjects you would have liked to teach but are unable to due to the demands arising from the CEE?"

	Total No. (N = 18)	Urban (N = 10)	Rural (N = 8)
Yes	17	10	7
No	1	-	1

### Discussion

These results further indicate how the CEE was likely to impose constraints on teaching primary school subjects. Certainly there are no statutory obligations requiring teachers to adhere strictly to the examination syllabus; in fact, the Department of Education normally insists on the contrary. Such constraints are usually placed on them by society which, as mentioned earlier, evaluate their success through pupils' achievements in the examination. In trying to fulfil these expectations, the majority found themselves unable to attend to those courses outside CEE which they would have liked to incorporate into their teaching programmes. These views are emphasised below:

Of course I would have liked to teach social studies, science and music very much. But because the children are not to be examined on these things, I feel it is a waste of time to teach these until after CEE.

Urban teacher

Well, in fact I like to teach science, art and craft, and to do a lot of gardening with my pupils but here we think that any minute that we spend without doing CEE work, we are wasting children's time.

Rural teacher

Q: T 14b

Table 5.39: Teachers' Responses to, "Does the CEE sample adequately the aims and content of the Primary Curriculum?"

	Total No. (N = 18)	Urban (N = 10)	Rural (N = 8)
Yes	3	-	3
No	15	10	5

### Discussion

Like heads, most teachers, especially from the urban sample, believed that the CEE papers and work done in schools to prepare children for the examination respectively did not appear to sample satisfactorily the essential objectives exemplified in the primary curriculum. In view of the constant use of the CEE past papers as practice lessons for children, the majority admitted that there was little correspondence between stated primary school objectives and those associated with the CEE. This evidence could hardly be more telling since it came from those charged with the responsibility of preparing children for the examination. As stated in the case of heads, the main reason for such imbalances is their failure to teach the variety of subjects comprising the upper primary curriculum.



### 5.12.1 Analysis of Teaching Timetables

Further evidence concerning the effects of the CEE on the primary curriculum was obtained from the teaching timetables prepared by teachers for use in their classes. In the absence of class observation data on teaching activities, it was decided to collate and analyse these in relation to the official timetable presented in Table 5.1. The main obstacle to this exercise was the teachers' reluctance to reveal unreservedly the subjects they were actually covering as opposed to those recommended for schools. This problem of authenticity was reflected in the timetables collected from them during the preliminary tours to schools. In this context, most of them submitted either a balanced timetable consisting only of prescribed subjects or a combination of these with the CEE courses. To obviate such artefacts, they were given back the timetables during the interviews and asked to underline only those subjects they were teaching.

### Results

Of the 18 timetables analysed, only one urban school did not appear to distort the teaching of most primary school subjects although even then the timetable prepared in this school for the examination class made no reference to the science-related subjects advocated in the primary curriculum. As for the rest, the only non-CEE subjects mentioned in their timetables were religious knowledge and Koranic studies. Apart from these, other references were to games and library studies in one other urban school and home

economics in a rural school. Apart from these exceptions, in both regions, all other subjects not examined were excluded from the timetables and replaced by those examined in the CEE. Appendices T-U exemplify the two distinctive types of timetable obtained from teachers. The first one represents an example of subjects and time allocations given by the rest of teachers while the other is the timetable prepared for the examination class in the lone urban school referred to.

### Discussion

The differences evident in the two timetables cited above have been created probably as a result of the desire by the majority of the teachers to adopt an examination-directed teaching model which they deemed necessary to help many of their pupils succeed in the CEE and enrol in secondary high school. As indicated earlier, both internal and external forces that impinge on them, coupled with their perceptions of the relatively lower transition ratios to desired secondary schools, seemed to have encouraged them to concentrate more on CEE subjects rather than those in the upper primary curriculum.

### 5.13 FORM ONE PUPILS

Q: FP 10 and FP 13

Table 5.40: Subjects liked most by Form One Pupils while in Primary Six

	Total % (N = 235)	Urban % (N = 191)	Rural % (N = 44)
CEE subjects	85	87	78
Primary school subjects	15	13	22

Table 5.41: Subjects disliked most by Form One Pupils while in Primary Six

	Total % (N = 235)	Urban % (N = 191)	Rural % (N = 44)
CEE subjects	23	24	26
Primary school subjects	77	76	74

### Discussion

These results suggest that the majority of pupils in both regions might have had less favourable attitudes towards non-CEE subjects while being prepared for the examination. Of the very small group who dissented according to the findings in Table 5.40, most only cited subjects such as games and singing (which are usually taken in primary six after the CEE) rather than mainstream



subjects comprising the primary syllabus. Also, the main reason for the minority group in Table 5.41 expressing a dislike for CEE subjects seems to relate to the problems involved in doing the subjects mentioned; which were mathematics and the quantitative paper (see Appendix Q) rather than to the development of any genuine dislike. These papers are generally perceived by candidates as being more difficult to do than the other examinable subjects. Thus, apart from these problems, the opinion indicated by most of them seems to highlight how pupils might have disliked learning the primary school subjects when they were candidates for the examination. As revealed previously, competition for success in the examination is often very intense in schools, particularly because only a small proportion of candidates can secure places in secondary high schools. In view of this, most pupils were unlikely to have liked doing those subjects that did not appear in the examination.

#### 5.13.1 Essay Data

Further evidence from Form One pupils concerning the CEE's influence on the primary curriculum derived from their essays. Analyses of the scripts revealed, amongst other things, that most pupils had referred to the subjects studied by them in school when they were candidates for the examination. These subjects were then analysed into two categories: the CEE and non-CEE. The following table contrasts their responses.

Table 5.42: Subjects taken in School by Form One Pupils while in the Examination Class

	Total % (N = 241)	Urban % (N = 197)	Rural % (N = 44)
CEE subjects only	69	70	66
CEE and others	13	11	23
No response	18	19	11

### Discussion

It appears as if the majority of pupils were not taking subjects not examined in the CEE during their final year in the primary school. Circumstances likely to motivate schools and in particular pupils to adopt such practices were cited in the preceding discussion and earlier ones. In view of this, the majority of pupils in the two regional samples referred mostly to subjects examined in the CEE when describing their experiences about the courses they had pursued in Primary Six. This examination-oriented mode of instruction was stressed by some of the respondents in their essays:

We studied Mathematics, Verbal Aptitude, English and Quantitative Aptitude, we went through examination papers. Also we did tests every other day.

Urban pupil

We had Mathematics, English, Verbal Aptitude and Quantitative Aptitude. But we did not do other subjects because the teachers said that if we did those, they will make us weak.

Rural pupil

In primary six, we did English, Mathematics, Quantitative Aptitude, Verbal Aptitude, Composition and Letter Writing. We did not do gardening but we will do games every day after the examination.

Urban pupil

As some of the samples of past CEE papers given in this dissertation (see Appendix Q) show, all the subjects indicated above were those taken in the examination.

#### 5.14 PRIMARY SIX PUPILS

Qs: PPSC 9 and PPSC 11

Table 5.43: Primary Six Pupils' Favourite School Subjects

	Total % (N = 353)	Urban % (N = 233)	Rural % (N = 120)
CEE subjects	83	82	83
Non CEE subjects	17	18	17

Table 5.44: Subjects disliked most by Primary Six Pupils

	Total % (N = 353)	Urban % (N = 233)	Rural % (N = 120)
CEE subjects	26	27	25
Non CEE	74	73	75

#### Discussion

Just as with Form One, both Tables 5.43 and 5.44 appear to suggest that the majority of children in both regions were likely to have more favourable attitudes towards the CEE courses than towards



primary school subjects. Already a variety of instrumental values associated with success in the examination by Primary Six pupils were indicated. In the main, parents and schools are also likely to reinforce such perceptions to the extent that children become disinterested in pursuing non-CEE work.

Small groups of respondents have expressed opinions contrary to those cited above. In the case of Table 5.43, those who tended to take non-CEE courses cited mostly activities such as games or singing. Likewise in Table 5.41, the dislike indicated for CEE subjects did not appear to reflect any real distaste for such courses; rather such references were made because, as stated before, children find it more difficult to cope with the subjects concerned, namely Mathematics and the Quantitative Aptitude paper. These latter findings do not therefore seem to weaken those reported earlier concerning children's higher preference for CEE courses.

Qs: PPAQ1 a and b

These questions (see Appendix D) required primary six children to tick in two separate columns the subjects they had taken in Primary Five and those being taken in Primary Six.

Table 5.45: Subjects taken in Class Five

	Total % (N = 359)	Urban % (N = 235)	Rural % (N = 124)
CEE subjects only	17	16	19
CEE and primary school subjects	83	84	81

Table 5.46: Subjects being taken in Class Six

	Total % (N = 359)	Urban % (N = 235)	Rural % (N = 124)
CEE subjects only	80	85	71
CEE and primary school subjects	20	15	29

### Discussion

Assessment of subjects offered in Primary Five was done on the assumption that formal preparations for the CEE might have started in those classes. There seems to be evidence for this view in Table 5.40 as there were references by most pupils to CEE work as well as non-CEE work in the Primary Five classes. This finding seems to be consonant with the practice commonly adopted in some schools in preparing children for the examination. Usually subjects in the examination are taught to Primary Five children in conjunction with those in the primary syllabus. Also, in several schools, Primary Six teachers begin teaching CEE work to Primary Five classes as soon as the Primary Six classes have finished with their examination.

Further, the impact of the examination in dominating the work done in primary six classes is clearly noticeable from Table 5.46. Once again, the less emphasis given to non-CEE courses may be explained in terms of the great importance that Primary Six children attached to the importance of success in the examination. Altogether, responses given by children in both regions seem to confirm the expectation that they might contribute to distorting

recommended subjects in the curriculum through their negative attitudes towards courses that do not appear in the examination.

To sum up:

This chapter investigated the influences of the CEE on the teaching and learning process and on the content of the upper primary school curriculum in terms of prescribed subjects. The discussions were preceded by consideration of such issues as the major objectives enunciated for primary education, the curriculum and time allocation of various subjects in schools, references to some of the key teaching and learning practices recommended for schools, prospects for professional training of teachers and some of the main existing avenues for the dissemination of innovations in education from the Department of Education and its agencies to teachers working in schools.

Concerning the broad objectives of primary education, reference was first made to the government's desire after independence to develop education at this level so as to facilitate the identification of individuals who could be given further schooling for ultimate employment in various sectors of the civil service. But in addition, as was observed, great emphasis was given to the cultivation in the primary curriculum of the knowledge and skills deemed appropriate for a country in which a huge number of citizens derive their livelihood from peasant agriculture. Thus the primary curriculum was designed in a way that was supposed to cater not only for the needs of the primary leavers likely to transfer to post-primary schools, but also for those of the majority whose formal education might end at this level.



Based on these objectives, CDC, with the approval of the Department of Education, has designed a subject timetable for use in all classes of primary. The timetable lays much stress on foundation courses and science-based and vocationally-oriented courses. Both the Department of Education and CDC hope that adequate coverage of the primary curriculum, with much emphasis given to these key areas, especially at upper primary, might help in providing 'relevant' learning outcomes for prospective post-primary entrants and dropouts.

Our discussions in this chapter have also cited a number of teaching and learning practices recommended for the primary curriculum. These include: the need to relate work in schools closely to children's immediate experience and physical environment; awareness; group work; appropriate problem-solving skills; creativity; and relevant off-school visits and projects. By focusing teaching and learning on these activities, it is hoped that children might be provided with education 'relevant' to their needs.

Among the conditions necessary for achieving the implementation of these recommended practices or activities were thought to be an adequate quality and quantity of the supply of trained teachers to schools and the existence of infrastructures in the country for communicating various forms of educational innovation and educational policies to teachers throughout the country. In view of this, some of the facilities available in the country for the professional development of the teaching force at both pre-service and in-service levels were outlined. Reference was also made to those educational institutions responsible for intimating teachers

with current trends in teaching and learning, and on the entire curriculum in general.

Following these preliminary descriptions, the assumptions adopted earlier in this chapter were examined from the responses made by the respondent groups concerning the main issues that were investigated. As regards the investigation on the distribution of teachers' selective attention, it was expected that most of them might give such attention to clever children who were more likely to do better in the CEE than dull ones. By contrast, the views of the majority of teachers in both regions did not appear to provide support for this assumption. This is because most teachers who gave selective attention to children said they did so mainly for remedial purposes, rather than as tacit attempts to help children prepare for the examination. These findings, which might help to reduce the pressures associated with the CEE, seem to complement the emphasis in the primary curriculum for schools to try and provide 'relevant' learning experiences for children who might succeed in the CEE and those unlikely to do so.

Investigations with teachers continued with an assessment of their perceptions on the development of cooperative learning strategies in their teaching programmes. In order to investigate this topic more thoroughly, their views on competitive learning were likewise sampled. Unlike their previous data on selective attention in class, most teachers in both regions seemed to be enforcing competition in their classes rather than cooperation in learning. As was apparent from some of the responses quoted on these issues, encouraging such competition was thought to be necessary for achieving good results in the CEE, which in turn

afforded teachers a better societal image as well as enabling the children to attain places in secondary high schools.

Next, the opinions of teachers were sampled as to whether they were encouraging their pupils to ask questions in class. As revealed from the views expressed by the majority in both regions, the children hardly initiated any questioning during the lessons in school. As stated earlier, teaching and learning in the CEE classes are organised in the main as practice sessions during which time there is very little opportunity for children to ask questions. Other than occasional chalk illustrations on the blackboard by teachers when they might ask children a few questions, a greater proportion of the available time is usually spent by children in doing problems or exercises from CEE texts. The findings therefore appear to confirm our argument that most teachers might give less emphasis to the development of enquiry learning because of the pressures associated with the CEE.

Similar results were noted in the investigations into the strategies teachers adopted as a way of helping their children to develop skills in problem-solving in school. Earlier in this chapter, certain subject areas in the primary curriculum and activities related to the teaching and learning of those subjects were mentioned, the proper use of which could create conducive situations for children to be intrinsically motivated to indulge in self-interest learning, especially in trying to solve their own learning problems. However, as indicated in their responses as to how they were helping their children to develop problem-solving skills in class, the majority of teachers referred only to the use of problem-solving skills in mathematic lessons. As stated



earlier, the way mathematics and other subjects are taught in the CEE classes could hardly encourage the development of such skills in children. As noted previously, a more common practice in these classes seems to be for teachers to encourage children to cram mathematical formulae and processes involved in working out certain recurring topical problems related to the examination than for the children to try to understand their solutions. Such practices were unlikely to result in the application by children of problem-solving skills, in which comprehension is vital for gaining success.

Further evidence concerning the lack of emphasis given to comprehension learning has emerged from other views expressed by teachers. In response to a question asking them to show how they were assisting their pupils in the way of comprehension learning, most of them in both regions stated that these skills were being enhanced through the use of English comprehension lessons in class. However, the problems likely to surround the use of mathematic lessons by teachers in trying to facilitate the development of problem-solving skills for children also seem likely to affect the use of English comprehension lessons for the purposes of bringing about comprehension in learning as both subjects are usually taught to children in the same way. Again, as was the case with their opinions about problem-solving, the failure by the majority of teachers to mention some of the activities like the primary school subjects such as science, social studies and out-of-door nature visits, which seem to have a greater potential in aiding comprehension in children's learning, tends to suggest that most teachers were not exposing children to learning experiences intended to develop deep approaches to learning. Furthermore, their

opinions on the use of rote-memorisation in learning, in which most of them referred to its use in their classes, seem to reinforce this interpretation.

Equally, there was confirmation for our assumption pertaining to the failure by teachers to emphasise the teaching of subjects that might enhance the growth of skills in basic creativity in children. In this regard the majority of teachers agreed according to their responses on this issue that such subjects were only likely to be taught after the CEE. Some of the problems attending to the conduct of lessons in the CEE classes after the examination has been taken by children have already been mentioned. Consequently, the conclusion seems to be that most of the teachers did not appear to have done much work which could have aided the development of skills in creativity.

Investigations conducted with children have provided additional evidence on the influences of the CEE on teaching and learning processes at upper primary. For example, as revealed in Form One pupils' responses to questions concerning their reactions and those of their teachers' respectively to poor grades, many of them mentioned negative views which were characterised by such expressions as "feeling sad", "becoming angry" and "will compete by working harder". Such comments are likely to generate keen competition in the CEE classes because both children and teachers tend to believe that success in getting good grades in examination practice classes would be an indication for eventual success in the examination.

In general, such inter-pupil competition which arises from strong desires for achieving success in the examination could

probably thwart the adoption of desirable learning strategies in schools. For instance, as stated, one of the key objectives advocated in the primary curriculum was the creation of a suitable learning environment in which children might be motivated to learn to solve relevant problems. But contrarily, as the responses expressed by the majority of Form One pupils show, when faced with a difficult problem in learning, they were likely to seek assistance from someone else. This practice which clearly represents a strategic approach to learning seems unhelpful to pupils as far as the development of rudimentary problem-solving skills in school is concerned.

It was not surprising therefore to find further evidence for strategic learning from Form One pupils' responses on other issues. In answering an item concerning what they might do to try to understand their studies, most of them in both regions said they would merely repeat it several times. And again, in replying to an item on how they might endeavour to retain what they have studied, the majority gave the same answer. Their strong preference for using repetition as a learning strategy was further evident in their responses to the item, "In class we learned the following by heart", in which the majority in both regions cited the use of rote-memorisation. And furthermore, since most of the the CEE exercises found in pupils' work books are mainly multiple-choice items, the majority tended to like doing such items because they were (even if erroneously) perceived as being less difficult to do.

But whereas the above views seem to be in agreement with our adopted assumption, on the other hand the expectation that most Form One pupils might have high examination anxiety in respect of



the CEE was not tenable. Thus in their responses to the item, "During examinations, I become ...", only 30% expressed unease. They were the ones who had succeeded and might be expected therefore to be less likely to report worry and anxiety during the CEE.

The preceding studies were very similar to those conducted with Primary Six children. On the use of competition in learning, our argument that the majority might have preferred it to cooperation in learning was not supported by their responses to the item, "I do not normally discuss problems with my friends in class". One possible explanation for these results seems to be the fairly high rate of uncertainty; over a quarter of the respondents could not decide which response to give.

On their attitudes towards problem-solving, the investigations show that, in both regions, their views were similar to those of Form One pupils, since the majority indicated they would refer to others for help if they came across problems in learning. And again, like the Form One sample, most Primary Six children thought that comprehension in learning and retention of learned information might be facilitated merely by doing several repetitions when learning. Another area in which the opinions held by most Primary Six children tended to restate those of Form One pupils was rote-memorisation because, in both regions, the majority of Primary Six also indicated its use in their classes. But compared to the Form One sample, a relatively higher incidence of examination anxiety was reported in the Primary Six sample who still had the CEE in front of them.

The final topic investigated in this chapter was the likely influences of the CEE on the teaching and learning related to

prescribed subjects in the upper primary school timetable. In order to investigate the opinions of parents, it was considered necessary to initially find out whether they were aware of the subjects their children were doing in school. As shown in their responses to this issue, in the urban and rural samples, the majority knew the subjects being studied by their children in school. When further asked whether they would like their children to study other subjects, most of them said no. As indicated in their responses, the main reason was that already the children had enough work to do for the CEE alone. Further evidence indicating that children were doing mainly work related to the examination came from questions in which they were asked whether they had bought any textbooks for children during that year and to name such books. In each case a majority of parents in both regions respectively responded that they had bought textbooks for their children and that these were the CEE books. These results appear to show that most parents were more concerned with the use of the CEE materials than those related to primary subjects as prescribed by the Department of Education.

A similar concern for the CEE course relative to other primary subjects appeared in the responses given by heads. Replying to questions which sought their views on whether there were any differences between the subjects and textbooks respectively provided in classes 5 and 6, the majority in both regions replied in the affirmative. As explained, the conclusion seems to be that there was more CEE work being done by children than work pertaining to other primary subjects. Additional support for this observation came from their answers to a question in which they were asked to

indicate what work the CEE classes did after the examination had been held. In reply, the majority said they would try to do the recommended primary subjects, thus implying that the teaching and learning of those subjects were temporarily suspended while the examination was pending. Not surprisingly therefore, when asked whether the CEE did adequately sample the aims and content of primary education, most heads in both regions gave a no-response. As was the case with parents, these results, which seem to provide confirmation for our arguments, illustrated in a variety of ways the extent to which the examination was affecting the recommended coverage of primary school subjects in upper classes.

Data obtained from teachers also highlighted similar effects indicating evidence for some of our expectations. Asked if they were giving homework to their pupils, the majority in both regions said yes. However, when this issue was further probed, it was clear that most teachers used only CEE work in giving children homework assignments to do. This was the case also for the weekly tests administered in class by teachers. Further justification for our assumption was obtained from their responses to questions such as whether the examination had imposed constraints upon them by their not being able to teach non-examinable subjects, and whether the examination satisfactorily measured up to the aims and content of primary education. According to the views expressed by the majority in response to each question, both in urban and rural samples, the responses were yes and no respectively. Analyses carried out on their class timetables produced similar findings.



As with the adult samples, the views held by children reinforced our argument concerning the preference for work on the CEE rather than that devoted to the recommended primary subjects. In a series of investigations in which Form One pupils' views were sampled on the use of the CEE resources relative to the primary subjects, it was shown that most of them perceived the CEE subjects as their favourites. Also in both regions, the majority of Form One pupils said that, while in the examination class, they had studied only the CEE subjects. Similar opinions were held by the majority of Primary Six children. Thus, like their teachers, the evidence from the Primary Six sample in both regions gave a further indication of the imbalance between the CEE work and coverage of upper primary subjects which tended to favour the examination.

On the whole, the series of investigations reported in the two preceding chapters of this dissertation have established more supportive than contrary evidence for our working assumptions (see Chapter 3). It may be observed from Chapter 1 that a series of problems related to primary and post-primary education were identified as possible exacerbators of society's anxieties about success in the CEE. One of these key problems concerned the perceived relatively low standing of primary leavers in the modern sector labour markets. The investigations discussed at the beginning of Chapter 1 have provided empirical evidence for the unfavourable job prospects for primary leavers. In the same chapter there was a consistent finding indicating that most respondent groups attributed these employment problems to inherent shortcomings in the quality of upper primary education. This evidence has provided empirical support for the common expression

made in The Gambian communities and for the secondary data reviewed in Chapter 1 which, among other things, related leavers' employment problems to the perceived low level of education achieved at the end of the prescribed primary school career.

Equally, the evidence derived from this chapter, reflecting predominantly instrumental attitudes towards the CEE, is in line with the assumption on the CEE. As was noted, most respondent groups tended to regard success in the examination as more significant than primary education generally. Consequently, much more attention and support was given to preparations for the examination than to the prescribed primary curriculum.

On the other hand, investigations into primary school outcomes have revealed some support and some refutation for our stated assumptions, although the former was greater. Therefore, whereas the views held by most teachers, Primary Six and Form One samples were consonant with our assumptions, those held by heads and parents were less so. But, despite these contrary views, the series of distortions evident in the process and content of upper primary education (discussed earlier in this chapter) greatly reinforced our assumptions that preparations for the examination might adversely affect schooling at this level.

The evidence on the regional investigations in Chapters 4 and 5 were, on the other hand, less supportive of the assumptions concerning the two regions. It may be remembered that in Chapter 3 it was assumed that primary leaver employment problems might be expressed more by urban respondent groups than their rural counterparts. It was further argued that respondent groups in the urban areas would attach more importance to the CEE and primary

school outcomes than their rural colleagues and therefore the impact of the examination in affecting primary schooling would be greater in the urban than in the rural area. On the contrary, however, the overall inter-regional data did not appear to show these anticipated regional differences at all.

In addition to the explanations given earlier (and aside from the problems of the study cited in Chapter 3), a number of key factors may be identified as the main sources for the similarity of views between rural and urban respondent groups in most of the areas investigated in Chapters 4 and 5. These are the continued rapid expansion of primary school provision in the rural areas after independence, the problems affecting the growth and purchase of the main rural income-generating economic activity (groundnuts) and internal migration of individuals and family units from rural to urban areas in previous years.

As regards school expansion, the comparative data on school provision in the two regions before and after independence given in Chapter 3 among other things highlight the great extent to which the rural area has increased its primary school facilities after independence. Therefore, despite resistance to schooling by some sections of the rural communities, as mentioned before, the availability of more primary school places, coupled with the enrolment incentive schemes initiated by the government (see Chapter 2) could have inspired the rural respondent groups to have favourable attitudes towards the CEE and primary school outcomes like their urban counterparts.

These attitudes could have been buttressed by the failure of the groundnut trade (see Chapter 1). And, in view of these



problems, the average rural farmer had enjoyed only a modest increase in real earnings since independence. Thus, apart from the fact that the rural farmer failed to improve his relative earning position as much as the lowest paid worker did in the urban area since independence, poor prospects in agriculture, which is the only major cash crop economic activity in these areas, meant that they were without viable alternative occupations in which they and their children could engage.

As a result of these problems, the past years have witnessed a steady movement of people from rural to urban areas in search particularly of education, paid jobs and improved social services. This trend of internal migration has been noted in The Gambia (Sise, op. cit.) as well as in other countries (Findley, 1982; Oberai, Singh and Mammohan, 1983). Oberai and colleagues in particular reveal that, while the world's urban population increased from 719 million in 1950 to 1,560 million in 1975, over the same period the population increase for less developed countries was much greater: from 259 to 771 million.

Like the reasons given earlier as motives for internal migration in The Gambia, Findley's interviews also show that rural to urban migrants were satisfied with their new lives. They based their satisfaction on changes in employment, income, social services and educational facilities for their children. In the case of The Gambia, prevailing circumstances such as the very small size of the country, the extended family units which encourage wardships for children, scarcity of economic and social amenities in rural areas and inter-tribal marriages between regions, have all tended to favour rural drift into urban areas. Therefore, the wide range of

benefits associated with such internal migration of people seem also to partly explain why rural residents, as well as their urban colleagues, might have had positive attitudes towards salaried jobs, the CEE and primary schooling in general.

Having summarised the main findings in Chapters 4 and 5 and related them to stated assumptions, the final chapter of this dissertation considers their implications for theory and practice.

## CHAPTER 6

### CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSIONS

#### 6.1 INTRODUCTION

Six major conclusions are derived from this study and these are summarised in the next section of this chapter. Following this, each will be considered in relation to previous research. Thereafter, their implications for upper primary schooling in The Gambia will be examined. In the final section, a few suggestions that might help to reduce higher demands on the CEE and possible distortions on education at this level are presented.

#### 6.2 SUMMARY OF THE MAIN CONCLUSIONS

1. The discussions presented in the first section of Chapter 4 highlighted poor employment prospects for primary leavers in the modern sectors of the Gambian economy.
2. In the same discussions, these poor job prospects were attributed mainly to the low level of education attained at the end of the primary course.
3. The evidence which emerged in Section 2 of that chapter indicated a strong instrumental orientation to the CEE.
4. The findings discussed in the final part of the same chapter revealed more instrumental than non-instrumental orientation to primary school outcomes.



5. The data presented in various sections of Chapter 5 indicated distortions in teaching and learning processes and in the content of the upper primary curriculum in terms of prescribed subjects.

6. There is an absence of noticeable regional differences in most of the findings cited above.

### 6.3 COMPATIBILITY WITH PREVIOUS RESEARCH

To a large extent the above conclusions seem compatible with those established in several previous studies. With regard to the status of primary leavers in job markets, both the evidence on poor job prospects and the explanations described in Chapter 4 seem to be consistent with the history of The Gambian labour market and previous investigations in other developing countries. Concerning The Gambia, before the establishment of secondary high schools in the 1940s and secondary modern schools (now renamed secondary technical) towards the end of the 1950s, it was a common practice for people to leave school either from Primary Six or Seven. Given the limited number of schooled individuals in the country, school leavers were in general able to secure paid employment in the modern sectors of the economy. Following the creation of post-primary schools, qualification escalation ensued whereby employers tended to prefer graduates from these schools to those from primary school, thereby largely displacing primary leavers from the labour markets.

Primary leavers' employment problems worsened after independence particularly because of the incidence of escalation in

qualifications as well as the small size of the modern sector of the economy in relation to school leaver population. Further evidence for this pessimism derived from a comment made by the Ministry of Economic Planning and Industrial Development:

... In the case of primary leavers, they tend to be socially alienated from their local communities. With ... increased expectations, they will look for paid jobs which are not normally available to them.

(GG/MEPID, 1981: 79)

Several previous investigations conducted, especially in East African countries (ILO/JASPA, Ea, op. cit.) and other West African countries (ILO/JASPA, WA, op. cit.) provide support for The Gambian evidence related to grim job prospects for primary leavers in addition to the main explanations given. More recently, King's (1984) survey of educated youth unemployment in Commonwealth countries reinterprets some of these findings. He noted:

The ordinariness of primary school leavers ... meant they were no longer seriously considered for modern sector jobs.

... The inevitable democratisation of primary education after Independence devalued overnight the marketability of the primary school certificate.

(King, 1984: 5)

In these studies, the explanations given for primary leavers' job problems and the consequences on education, such as greater demands for examinations and post-primary schooling deemed important in securing such jobs, are essentially in line with those given in Chapter 4 of this dissertation.

Concerning attitudes towards the CEE, the high instrumentality reported in the same chapter previously emerged in studies related to examinations that perform functions similar to those in The Gambia. Such evidence, which derived respectively from Kenya (Dore, op. cit.; King op. cit.; Somerset, op. cit.) and

from Malaysia (Lewin, op. cit.) is consistent with that reported here. In these investigations, the authors in particular referred to the terminal examinations in question as life-allocating mechanisms. In this regard, Somerset for example observed:

If ... [the child] passes [the examination] ... he has a good chance of ... entering a job where his income may reach ten, twenty or even one hundred times the national per capita average. But if he fails, his life-time earnings may not amount to more than those ... with no formal education.

(Somerset, 1972: 149)

The same is true in The Gambia. As noted in Chapters 1 and 4 of this dissertation, success in the CEE affords Primary Six pupils places in a popular secondary school. Possession of a leaving certificate from the school enhances their future job prospects in the modern sectors of the economy.

Similar evidence concerning the influence of the CEE on schools and teachers was also reported in earlier investigations (Unger, op. cit.; Dore, op. cit.). But in contrast to The Gambian data, Dore also indicates that in certain countries such as Kenya and Sri Lanka, examination success was also important in influencing teachers' progression on the career ladder. In the case of The Gambia, probably because of the system of recruiting and promoting teachers on the 'open market', the evidence did not refer to the CEE as being important in determining teachers' progress.

The Gambian data concerning special support for the CEE confirm findings obtained from elsewhere. The East African studies cited several times in this dissertation (King, op. cit.; Somerset, op. cit.) revealed in particular that parents and teachers in Kenya encouraged repetition in CPE in the belief that it helped to improve children's performances in the examination and thus enabled them to



secure places in good secondary schools. This belief and the consequent pressure seems equally prevalent in The Gambia.

Similar evidence in other areas of assistance towards the CEE such as the provision of textbooks, organisation of special practice sessions in school and payment of fees for attendance in these classes appears also in these East African studies. In Sri Lanka, Dore (op. cit.) has indicated parents' enthusiasm in supporting their children in costly but popular examination drill classes. In The Gambia similar conditions apply, especially in the urban area where the payment of drill class fees is common practice.

With reference to the data on school functions, the non-instrumental views expressed by half The Gambian parents and the majority of primary heads seem to reinterpret the opinions held by most Mexican parents (Brooke et al. op. cit.) and their counterparts in Ghana (Boakye et al.). In comparison, the views held by most teachers and children in The Gambia on the issues which were mainly instrumental were similar to those reported in the Tanzanian study (Dubbeldam, op. cit.) Writing about the attitudes of Tanzanian parents towards primary schooling outcomes, Dubbeldam observes:

This argument goes so far for some parents that if their children fail to find paid employment, they consider the money invested in their education as a loss.

(Dubbeldam, 1970: 120)

As was also noted in the case of The Gambia, it is a common practice for parents and primary school teachers to regard primary leavers as failures if they are unable to win places in coveted secondary high schools. This view was explained earlier in terms of the value associated with terminal certificates obtained from these schools and their use for the modern sector job markets.

Studies conducted in other developing countries have reported findings similar to those pertaining to a series of distortions on advocated teaching and learning methods and the primary curriculum which were described in Chapter 5 of this dissertation. The non-distribution of teachers' extra attention to individual pupils or groups in their classes likely to perform satisfactorily in the CEE, is supported by the Mexican (Brooke et al., op. cit.) and the Ghanaian (Boakye et al., op. cit.) investigations respectively. A comment taken from the Mexican work seems to explain why the reported selective distribution of teachers' attention seemed unrelated to instrumental motives: "I pay attention to those who are doing badly, if I do not, they get further and further behind and drop", (Brooke et al., 1980: 72).

If the findings reported from both studies and in The Gambia can be related to actual classroom practices, it may appear as if the majority of teachers foresaw no direct link between giving selective attention to certain individuals and maximisation of their success in the examinations concerned. In Ghana and Mexico, factors cited earlier, namely absence of centralised examinations in the latter and modest anxieties about the Middle School Leaving Certificate Examination in the former respectively, might partly explain these results. For The Gambia, given the extreme anxiety for success in the CEE which is a highly competitive, centralised selection examination, it seems doubtful whether the results reflected teachers' own classroom practices.

The data in the same chapter on the use of competition in learning rather than cooperation is consistent with a number of previous investigations (Unger, op. cit.; Little, 1980; Dore,

1981). Little in particular explains that, when schools give too much attention to school leaving examinations, they might not be able to adopt cooperative learning. According to this author, in classrooms where there are selective examinations, coupled with strong perceptions on the outcomes associated with the examinations, individual-competitive learning prevails.

The Gambian data have revealed a similar mode of schooling in the Primary Six classes. As indicated by most teachers, there seems to be a feeling in society and in primary schools that the CEE is all about competition. This view seems to derive especially from people's awareness that higher cut-off marks are usually needed to guarantee entry into the limited places in secondary high schools.

Several investigators (Dore, op. cit.; King, op. cit.; Lewin, op. cit.) (see also Chapter 2) have provided evidence related to some of the other key distortions in teaching and learning processes which were reported in the chapter under review especially the use of rote-memorisation in contrast to such desired practices as enquiry or comprehension learning. As was the case in The Gambia's CEE, in most of the countries where the studies cited above were conducted, preparations for terminal and other similar examinations seemed to have dominated teaching and learning processes. As stated by Lewin et al. (1983: 302), such a curriculum "teaches students how to pass examinations, to be punctual, docile and obedient".

Largely because of these circumstances, coupled with the threat of examinations, teaching and learning in examination classes usually devalue the genuine pursuit of knowledge through setting a



high premium on guess work and memorisation or passive learning (Wong, 1969). These views have been expressed by a number of other investigators (Hawes, 1979; Azuma, Dore and Wijemanne, 1980; Entwistle, op. cit.). For example, Entwistle noted:

The threat of formal examinations and the revisions associated with them, may push pupils towards memorisation ..., it may leave them with the idea that learning is nothing more than reproducing ... facts and ideas.

(Entwistle, 1983: 213)

Because learning seems to be conceptualised as the acquisition of isolated facts which are to be used later in examinations, all other creative modes of learning such as those cited in Chapter 5 of this dissertation are devalued. Furthermore, lack of cognitive complexity in the processing of informing, resulting from fact-rote learning, may produce surface learning rather than deep learning or comprehension (Saljo et al., op. cit.; Biggs, op. cit.). Biggs also explains that this could happen where individuals adopt the 'utilising orientation' when learning or studying rather than the internalising orientation (Biggs, 1979: 329). For the utilising orientation, pupils often learn or study in order to pass examinations or obtain qualifications, consequently they become syllabus-bound. In contrast, for those described as adopting internalising orientation, learning is desired for its intrinsic value, and therefore they are syllabus-free.

Likewise, a number of previous investigations provide evidence for the distortions on prescribed primary school subjects which were evident in The Gambian study (Hawes, op. cit.; Azuma et al., op. cit.; Wong, op. cit., see p.251). Hawes' analyses of primary school timetables and subject allocations in ten African countries indicate in particular that class timetables for upper

primary were less orientated either towards practical subjects or pre-vocational courses not examined externally. Apart from resource scarcity which might have affected the effective implementation of these courses, he attributed the distortions to the maintenance of strong affinities between primary schools and middle-class urban or semi-urban values mediated through the operation of external examinations.

Azuma et al. and Wong respectively reported similar distortions. According to Azuma et al., some of the adverse effects of examinations on education included distortions on those subjects providing scientific curiosity to students. Wong reveals that, because of the foibles of external examinations, syllabi in schools are usually perceived more in terms of past examination papers which "not only sample a very limited area of the curriculum, but also tend to carry questions similar in type and content year by year" (Wong, 1969: p.363). In these countries, as well as in The Gambia, there prevails what is often referred to as the "examination game" (Miller and Partlett, 1974) in which the "hidden" curriculum of schools (Snyder, 1971) supersedes the subjects of the prescribed curriculum.

The countries referred to in the investigations reported by Hawes, Azuma et al. and Wong share several common features with The Gambia. Consequently, the explanations given for distorting prescribed school subjects as well as several practices related to external examinations which were cited are also applicable to The Gambian context.

In contrast to The Gambian study, very few of the previous investigations cited in this dissertation so far used data from both

urban and rural samples. However, as noted in Chapters 4 and 5, The Gambian work reported mostly slight inter-regional differences on the issues investigated. Concerning expectations towards jobs or primary school outcomes generally, this evidence tends to corroborate the findings that emerged from Tanzania (Dubbeldam, op. cit.) and Senegal (Clignet, 1964) in which both urban and rural respondents expressed instrumental attitudes. On the other hand, it contradicts Clignet's findings related to Gabon and Mali which reported regional differences on these issues. In The Gambia and in these countries, circumstances such as school leavers' job problems; attractions associated with urban life; and employment practices which stress the use of school-based qualifications, seem to produce the reported distortions in education in both urban and rural areas.

#### 6.4 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE GAMBIAN PRIMARY EDUCATION

In this section an attempt is made to examine the implications of the main findings of the dissertation for upper primary education in The Gambia. However, the importance of these findings may be limited by a series of constraints that tended to affect this dissertation (see Chapter 3). Moreover, the investigation was conducted as an attitudinal and exploratory exercise; thus only tentative assumptions rather than rigid hypotheses were used in investigating the stated objectives. Nonetheless, there seems to be evidence that it has implications for the practice and content of upper primary education in The Gambia.



Before discussing the implications, it seems appropriate to reiterate the rationale behind the use of the CEE as a centralised selection examination in the terminal classes of primary schools. This is intended to indicate that, after all, the use of the examination in schools could have educational benefits for the majority of pupils if certain precautions were taken.

As stated in Chapter 1, the initial justification for adopting it was for the purpose of the identification of individuals who could be given further schooling in preparation for future employment in the modern sectors of the economy. In order for the preparation of the examination to be beneficial to most primary leavers, WAEC had intended that, other than being a selection device, it should provide knowledge and experiences 'relevant' to those going to post-primary as well as those terminating their formal schooling. In the same vein, the Department of Education has emphasised that primary education in general should satisfy the needs of both groups of primary leavers.

The practice of preparing pupils for school leaving examinations is generally regarded as an important traditional function of education. As regards the CEE, if the dual function were to be harmonised through relating its preparations more closely with the upper primary curriculum, it could probably have greater educational effects for most pupils in the terminal classes of primary.

Also, concern for the school leaving examination is a universal phenomenon. In fact, investigators (Sharp and Thomson, op. cit.) aptly remark that we could not expect pupils, parents, and possibly teachers, to be unconcerned about the affairs of such

examinations. Nevertheless, what may be harmful to schools is overt concern for examinations to the extent that their preparations dominate teaching and learning related to the prescribed curriculum. Since the bulk of the evidence discussed in Chapters 4 and 5 seems to indicate that work pertaining to the CEE tended to over-preoccupy instruction at upper primary in The Gambia, it is necessary to assess some of the implications of this evidence for the practice and content of education at this level.

Both the consistent evidence concerning primary leaver employment problems and the widespread attribution of the problems to an unsatisfactory standard of primary education seem to have implications for the desirable pursuit of both the dual role assigned to the CEE and primary schooling generally. Given these findings, and coupled with the absence of formal pre-career training schemes in the country for primary leavers, it may be argued that individuals and schools will stress the selective rather than the educative role associated with the examination and primary education in general. In consequence, primary schools are unlikely to cater for the needs of the large majority of the Primary Six cohort who drop out annually. Some of the social and economic implications of this practice, especially the failure to provide for most leavers knowledge and skills considered 'relevant' to living in a predominantly agricultural environment, will be mentioned later in this section.

Greater concern for the selective rather than the educative functions of the CEE and primary education would not only indicate distortions on the recommended teaching and learning process, but also it equally could prevent pupils from mastering the use of the

methods or hinder the proper development of such skills as problem-solving in school or in their social environment, and inter-individual cooperation which is deemed vital for living in a multi-racial society like The Gambia. It is likely that pupils would also be less exposed to several other desired learning experiences, for example the development of their minds towards basic forms of creativity through the use of local resources, scientific processes like cause and effect, and independent thinking and curiosity.

A further implication for teaching and learning processes concerns evidence on the use of rote-memorisation techniques in upper primary schools. Even, if the content of certain subjects or the solution of some topics like mathematical formulae warrant the adoption of rote-memorisation, their extended usage to other areas such as cramming grammatical topics and prepared essays, as reported in our investigations, could possibly make rote-memorisation dominate teaching and learning in primary schools. This in turn might affect the strong emphasis given to comprehension learning in primary schools. It may likewise have implications for other advocated objectives such as adaptability to learning and social environments and resourcefulness, the success of which seems to require in particular an active interaction between a learner and his educational or socio-cultural environment and the development and use of creative talents.

The evidence concerning distortions in the use of prescribed subjects also appears to have significance for primary education. It suggests that those subjects not taken in the CEE were less likely to be covered in the final classes of primary



schools. This seems to imply that the examination was affecting the objectives and content of primary education through restricting teaching and learning in terminal classes to a narrow range of examinable subjects. The adoption of this practice means most pupils in these classes might not be exposed to such important areas of the curriculum as agricultural, vocational, science-based and cultural studies. As indicated at the beginning of Chapter 5, knowledge and skills associated with these subjects are regarded as being very important either for primary school dropouts or those going on to post-primary.

Further evidence, the significance of which will be discussed, was the failure to establish wide regional differences on almost all the investigations reported in the dissertation. Like the data on selective attention, these results contradicted our prior arguments since it was argued earlier that individuals' attitudes towards the CEE and primary schooling generally, and distortions in primary education, were to be greater in urban than in rural areas.

A number of implications may be drawn from these inter-regional findings. Firstly, similar employment problems in the urban and rural areas might suggest that there is no rural-to-urban migration by school leavers in search of paid jobs, which was noted in Chapter 1 of this dissertation. But on a closer look, one effect of the educational systems in most developing countries like The Gambia, and especially of selective secondary education, is to increase demand specifically for paid employment. Since such paid employment is concentrated in the urban area, the incidence of migration cited above seems to be encouraged by the

system. This is likely to hamper the government's plan to arrest such movement of rural school leavers, as well as the efforts made to popularise the participation of rural leavers in non-wage occupations.

The reported instrumental attitudes towards the CEE in both regions implies competition for the examination is possibly high in each region. This might create problems, especially in rural areas where school places and CEE passes are relatively few compared to the urban area. This relative scarcity and the reported instrumental attitudes towards the CEE and primary school functions generally in both regions tend to have further implications not only for the process of primary education per se, but also it may be argued that the objectives and content of education at this level could be distorted in both regions and in the country in general. This is likely to arise because, in these classes, preparations for the CEE rather than those of the primary curriculum might possibly be pursued with greater intensity by teachers and pupils. And given that there was evidence suggesting the CEE and its preparations seemed unrelated to the recommended primary curriculum, the emphasis in this curriculum for providing the majority of pupils dropping out at the end of primary with terminally 'relevant' knowledge and skills would be difficult to achieve.

The children may have been exposed to some of these subjects and creative learning processes in the classes preceding Primary Six, but as far as learning related to the terminal syllabus in the primary school is concerned, the distortions reported in most areas suggest that either their teachers were not providing appropriate learning situations in which they could be exposed to

such experiences or that they themselves tended to adopt attitudes and learning strategies less likely to bring about such desirable or learning experiences. Therefore, even if it is possible for pupils to acquire these experiences elsewhere, the fact that they are unlikely to be emphasised in their final year seems to reinforce the previous observations that the CEE was affecting the main objectives, process and content of the prescribed upper primary education.

The overall results of the inquiry may also be viewed as having implications for the functions of some of the educational support units mentioned in Chapter 1, especially CDC, Teachers' Centres and the School Inspectorate Unit. As stated, the CDC is responsible for designing and implementing curricula at all levels within the educational system. Its specific reform functions include determining the aim, objectives and content of curricula, the development of relevant teaching and learning procedures and the resources and materials required for instruction in schools (GG/CDC, 1976: 13-18).

However, the impact of the CEE in undermining the work of the CDC has already been indicated in Chapter 1. Furthermore, the high examination-oriented instruction and its attendant distortions in the process and content of upper primary curriculum reported in this dissertation implies that the CDC would be unable to succeed in implementing their reform exercises in the examination classes, especially since instead of incorporating CDC textbooks, instructional materials and procedures into teaching and learning in the classes concerned, parents, pupils and teachers are more likely to prefer to use the CEE syllabus, textbooks and past examination



questions. The examination, therefore, is likely to hamper the introduction of genuine and worthwhile teaching-learning activities and experiences related to the official syllabus in Primary Six classes. This is the crucial point in the career of primary school pupils and the point where the CDC and the Department of Education have laid emphasis on the acquisition of knowledge and skills appropriate to the needs particularly of the huge number of children dropping out at the end of this level as well as those to be enrolled in post-primary schools.

Similar implications of the study may be brought out in respect of Teachers' Centres located in the educational administrative regions of the country. First established in 1984, the main functions of these centres are: to encourage teachers to examine traditional ideas and to investigate and develop new techniques in teaching; to promote the interchange of ideas and the sharing of experiences by teachers; to fulfil teachers' requirements for local in-service training; to enable teachers to keep abreast of new developments in educational technology; and to provide resources not readily available in schools (GG/ED, 1985: 2). Thus, apart from being ideal places in which teachers could be readily acquainted with the latest developments in teaching and learning procedures, the curricula, and acquire further knowledge and skills in the design and appropriate use of instructional aids, the centres could also enable teachers to equip their classrooms with relevant aids free of charge. Staff working at the centres ensure this by allowing teachers to take away all teaching and learning aids that they make.

Unfortunately, however, since the activities undertaken and the resources available in the centres have no relevance for the CEE

work, Primary Six teachers hardly visit these centres. Over-preoccupied with preparations for the examination, teachers and their pupils normally regard visits to the centres as a waste of valuable time which could be more usefully spent on doing further work on the examination. Strict adherence to the examination at upper primary therefore has serious implications for the operation of Teachers' Centres given that this practice prevents staff from providing vital professional knowledge, skills and advice as well as much needed resources to teachers handling these classes. During visits to the centres by the investigator, staff were uneasy about the non-use of their facilities by primary teachers in the CEE classes.

This investigation also has implications for the running of the School Inspectorate Unit which was also created in 1984. Presently, the main functions of the unit include reporting on work and standards in schools; identifying good practice and bringing to notice weaknesses requiring attention; stimulating and taking part in educational developments for the improvement of standards; and giving professional guidance to teachers (GG/ED, 1984: 5).

Certainly the successful implementation of these duties and responsibilities would be highly dependent upon the cooperation given to school inspectors by parents, teachers and pupils in the communities and schools. This is vital because, in general, whatever is taught and learnt in primary schools, particularly in the terminal classes, is determined by the three respective groups. As was the case with the CDC, the Inspectorate Unit is most unlikely to succeed in forging its activities in the upper primary classes. This may be due to the fact that the objectives and activities

prescribed as their major responsibilities are likely to be less attractive to the undermentioned groups of people who are keen participants in the process of primary schooling. Given the high priority given to the CEE, we may suggest that some of the strategist models of teaching and learning evident in this dissertation (which exclude the use of the primary syllabus) would be preferred for adoption in Primary Six classes to engaging in such activities as identifying and adopting good instructional practice or stimulating and taking part in educational developments. Therefore an added significance of the study for school inspection is that the main findings suggest the extent to which the activities of the inspectors might conflict with those desired by parents, pupils and teachers in the upper primary classes.

## 6.5 FINAL CONCLUSIONS

This dissertation sought to examine the effects of the CEE on The Gambian upper primary education. The main findings discussed in Chapter 4 indicated a number of variables that could generate instrumental orientation to the CEE and primary schooling generally rather than non-instrumental orientation. Similarly, in Chapter 5, there was consistent evidence related to distortions on pedagogy; learning; and prescribed primary school subjects; and as may be recalled from the discussions presented in this chapter, the overall findings appear to have implications for the theory and practice of education generally and for primary education in The Gambia.



The study has also raised a number of problems whose solutions seem to depend on the conduct of further investigations. For instance, given the evidence on poor employment prospects for primary leavers in the modern sectors of the economy reported in this study, and its impact in creating higher competition in the CEE, there seems to be the need to conduct research into alternative forms of career opportunities for leavers either in the informal sector or the local economy. Further investigations could also assess the possible impact of the CEE in creating differential access to post-primary schools between various regions, sexes, and religious groups within The Gambia. These studies might be able to reveal useful insights into the prevalence of such disparities and the attendant pressures associated with them which also tend to exacerbate the competition in the CEE.

Retrospective studies also seem to be required which may be directed towards analysing the skills exemplified in the CEE past papers and textbooks, and the primary syllabus and textbooks. These investigations could possibly provide more illuminating evidence concerning the correspondence or mismatches between the CEE and the upper primary curriculum which were evident in this study. And finally, given the benefits of reform exercises in improving the content and quality of examination papers, there seems to be an urgent need for the CDC, WAEC and the Department of Education to set in motion a joint research exercise in respect of the CEE. As in Kenya, such exercises could probably result in a more satisfactory

harmonisation between the content of the examination and that of the upper primary curriculum.

While we may be optimistic that future research endeavours and reform exercises might provide answers or solutions to the key problems identified in this dissertation, we may also emphasise that there are no immediate remedies, especially for primary leaver employment problems, extreme instrumental orientation to the CEE and primary schooling in general and the adverse consequence of such orientation on schooling at upper primary. This is mainly due to the existence in the country of such problems such as the inability of primary leavers to penetrate the modern sector labour markets; lack of resources to acquire more paid jobs and secondary high school places for the majority of school leavers and the CEE candidates respectively; the attitudes of people towards scarce but highly-paid jobs and the wide-ranging unfavourable circumstances surrounding the growth and marketing of the principal economic activity in rural areas (farming). Given these constraints, it is very likely that in the foreseeable future, the CEE will continue to be perceived quite instrumentally by most people in the communities, and the attendant undesirable consequences for upper primary schooling will also continue to be discernible. Nevertheless, in the following section, a few proposals aimed at minimising the impact of some of these problems are offered.

## 6.6 PROPOSALS

In many developing countries, efforts directed towards socio-economic reforms, in particular education, are often frustrated by a host of obstacles. These include, for instance, resistance to such changes by certain influential groups in society (Lewin and Little, 1982; Unger, op. cit.), political barriers and severe economic constraints such as scarcity of vital resources and trained manpower needed to service the reform exercise (Adams and Chen, 1981). Over the years some of these problems have affected the adoption in The Gambia of certain educational programmes (for example, search for pre-training schemes for primary leavers) which, if implemented, could possibly have succeeded in reducing anxieties about the CEE.

Despite the likely influences of these constraints on the ensuing proposals, it is hoped that the government's long-held desire to review the CEE might lead to their implementation. In proposing these, it has not been possible to provide any estimates for the costs that may be involved in adopting them or to ascertain the burden they might create for the national budget. But, circumstances do exist in the country that could perhaps ensure their implementation. For instance, despite economic constraints, allocations to the educational sector from this budget during the first and second National Development Plan periods (1975-81) maintained a steady upward trend (GG/MEPID, op. cit.). Similar trends are common in the economies of several developing countries, for example, Kenya, Mexico, Thailand and India (IDRC, 1982). Furthermore, recent optimism expressed by the government concerning such economic diversification schemes as tourism and fisheries seems



to imply that, in the near future, finance other than that deriving from the sale of groundnuts might be available in the country for use in furthering its socio-economic development including the educational sector. We shall now refer to the proposals which are given here.

#### 6.6.1 Changes in the CEE Papers

As may be seen from the brief description related to the CEE (see Appendix O), the only CEE subjects bearing some resemblance to those provided in the recommended primary curriculum are English and Mathematic papers. However, the contents of these subjects are dissimilar to those advocated for primary schools. This means there seems to be little correspondence between the examination and the primary curriculum.

Thus, there appears to be an urgent need for the use of most primary school subject areas in designing papers for the examination, if both the preparation for it as well as the primary curriculum are supposed to provide 'relevant' knowledge and skills for the great majority of leavers apart from being a post-primary selection mechanism. This may not present too complex a task as far as the use of most primary school subjects in the examination is concerned, because the subjects may be combined into a few major areas such as science-related, social studies, cultural subjects, language and mathematics.

These changes might, however, create a few problems. The proposed inclusion of extra subjects in the CEE could probably force WAEC to provide additional resources and specialist staff to handle

the extra examination papers. The latter problem, however, could be overcome through the establishment of more examination panels in order to cater for the papers that will be added to the examination. Moreover, such additions might be perceived by parents, their children and primary schools as an extra CEE work load, thus accelerating pressures for the examination. It may also be pointed out that, given the extreme examination orientation at upper primary, it is likely that the new subjects to be incorporated into the CEE could be subjected to distortions similar to those that were earlier reported in Chapter 5. But, despite these likely problems or shortcomings, the plan - if implemented - might result in a more satisfactory coverage of the upper primary curriculum.

This suggestion seems to be favourably welcomed by the CDC and the Education Department according to the data which derived from this study. For example, in response to an interview question, "What part does CDC play in the preparations of the CEE papers?", the CDC official replied:

So far there has not been any link between us and WAEC with regard to the examination ... We would definitely be interested to see that the examination be part of the entire evaluation designed to determine what is happening in the schools.

(EO 2)

It is interesting to note that the central theme in the above comment, as well as in the next proposal (namely the issuance of competency school leaving certificates) also feature in a report concerning reforms in assessment in schools in Scotland (Dunning, 1977). Thus, the issues addressed in this dissertation are not necessarily confined to developing countries, but are also seen to be applicable elsewhere.

The suggestion was also mentioned by the majority of primary heads and teachers. According to their responses on a possible review of the CEE papers (see Appendix V), most of them cited the use of primary school subjects in future CEE papers. In the same vein, the Malaysian (Lewin, op. cit.) and the Kenyan (Somerset et al.) studies cited earlier in this dissertation also recommended in particular that selection examinations should be so designed that they reflect the curricula of the schools of which they are part. The authors further recommended the use of devices capable of monitoring the operation of such examinations, especially their impact on schools, as well as a regular dissemination of information on examinations to pupils and schools. In the case of The Gambian CEE, WAEC does provide such feedback regularly.

It is necessary for most of the existing practices related to the design and administration of the CEE to remain as before so as to prevent a recurrence of its domination over the primary curriculum as the findings reported in Chapter 5 show. In this regard, the continued use of the two Aptitude Papers of the examination is also recommended as this might minimise the problem of teaching to the examination and learning by rote. Also, the examination will continue to be designed and conducted as described in this dissertation (see Appendix O). But, the rest of the examination papers will derive mainly from the primary school subjects prescribed by the CDC. These practices, coupled with the adoption of a curriculum-oriented examination as opposed to an essentially examination-oriented type, could possibly help to reduce its adverse effects on primary education.



#### 6.6.2 Introduction of Formal Primary School Leaving Certificate

Unlike other developing countries such as Kenya and Malawi, pupils in The Gambia whose formal education ends in primary school are normally issued with a testimonial instead of a formal termination certificate. Throughout developing countries in Africa, individuals as well as the government tend to accept the reality that most primary leavers will not be able to secure places in post-primary schools. This pessimism in respect of The Gambian situation was emphasised strongly in the Development Plan cited earlier:

As rapid expansion takes place towards universal primary education, it should be clear to parents, teachers and children alike that primary education will be terminal for the majority of school leavers.

(GG/MEPID, 1981: 246)

In view of these circumstances, issuance of a formal leaving certificate at the end of the primary course is being suggested here. Possession of such a certificate might not necessarily enhance primary leavers' employment prospects in the modern sectors of The Gambia, given the reported low standard of education attained in the terminal classes of primary. Likewise, it might not succeed in curbing either the present higher demands for success in the CEE or anxieties associated with the examination. Nevertheless, it might be used for the purpose of certifying pupils' achievements in the curriculum-oriented examination proposed in the preceding section.

According to the interview data gathered in this study, a representative of the Education Department (EO 1) and that of the CDC (EO 2) seemed to welcome the introduction of this certificate in

Primary Six classes. This latter official emphasised that the plan will not represent a new dimension of the 'Diploma Disease' syndrome, but rather, "all that the certificate will do will be to identify the skills and competencies that students acquired during their formal education from primaries 1 - 6" (EO 2).

In order to achieve the above objective and to create a less stressful climate in terminal classes of primary, it is further suggested that grades to be entered in the proposed certificate should derive from continuous assessment marks. One significant advantage of continuous assessment is that, compared to conventional examinations, it is less stressful to pupils (Siann and French, 1976). However, there is also evidence indicating that its use could evoke pressures if students think that they are continually being judged academically (Rowntree, 1977). But despite this problem, this mode of assessment (when introduced) is likely to be less anxiety-provoking in schools because it will be internally administered and free of examination bait. The certificate itself, which will record only pupils' competencies in the school curriculum, might serve as an important piece of information for schools, parents, pupils, the CDC and the Department of Education alike.

#### 6.6.3 Provision of Additional Secondary High School Places

The review of school expansion at the national level in Chapter 1 of this dissertation, among other things revealed a gross imbalance between the Primary Six cohort and Form One places in popular high schools. In view of the impact such disparity may

have in intensifying demands for success in the CEE, an increase in the number of available places in these forms is being recommended.

This proposal may be adopted at the regional level as well as universally. For instance, of the Administrative Divisions described earlier in this dissertation (see Chapter 3), two of them, namely North Bank Division and Lower River Division, have no secondary high schools. It is therefore being proposed that the junior secondary schools in these divisions be upgraded to secondary high school status. Another suggestion being made is the creation of additional streams in Form One classes of all the secondary high schools in the country.

Some of the possible constraints that may arise in adopting this proposal are the finances that may be required to construct additional buildings and to provide the necessary resources and trained staff. Nevertheless, since the government has recently indicated that henceforth the post-primary sector will be allowed to expand more than the primary (GG/ED, 1987), it is hoped the suggestion may be entertained by the government. Apart from finances and other resources to be provided by the government in implementing the suggestion, several foreign donors based in The Gambia such as Action Aid, Canadian Universities Service Overseas (CUSO), UNESCO and the World Bank Education Project could, if approached, possibly provide additional assistance.

If the secondary technical schools located in the preceding Administrative Divisions were to be upgraded, then all the major Divisions in the country will be provided with secondary high schools. This in turn is also likely to minimise rural to urban drift by parents and children in the respective Divisions in search



of secondary high school places as well as greater anxieties about success in the examination which are usually directed towards acquiring places in these schools. Thus, apart from possibly augmenting the limited number of available places in secondary high schools, the implementation of the proposal might have an important political implication, given that each major area of the country would be provided with secondary high school facilities. This is likely to reduce pressures arising from the examination in all parts of the country.

### Postscript

This brief postscript examines a number of major problems associated with the study in the light of future investigations. Earlier, the impact of some of the problems encountered when obtaining the main data of this dissertation was highlighted in Chapter 3. In addition, several conceptual, methodological and instrumentation issues, which also seemed to affect the dissertation, will be discussed.

As indicated, one of the main problems that had affected the dissertation was the limited time available for the fieldwork research. This problem seems to highlight the need for careful consideration to be given to the precise duration required to complete a particular study at the planning stage of the study, taking into account possible constraints that might affect the schedule of data collection. This observation is important because it appears that it is not only the length of time available that determines the completion of a research programme on schedule, but also the nature of the time available, such as its susceptibility to frequent, unexpected interruptions. We have observed earlier that, during the time of collecting the main data of this dissertation, certain interruptions occurred which were caused by, for example, delays in getting to the communities on schedule (due to transportation problems) and cancellations of scheduled visits by respondents (without advance notice). It appears very germane to the successful completion of studies that constraints such as these are borne in mind, especially for investigations launched in developing countries where experiences about research and resources

needed for their conduct are less favourable than in developed countries.

These constraints seem to be related to a wider significant issue in research, namely differences between the research environments in developing countries and those of developed countries. It seems therefore that one important pre-condition for achieving greater success in research is the realisation that there are differences between the research capacities of developed and developing countries, for example, experiences of people in participating in data collection, availability of infrastructure and other resources that may be required to support research, and the social, economic, political and cultural contexts of the countries concerned. Several writers have already indicated that, in addition to marked qualitative differences in research capacity between developed and developing countries, there are also dissimilarities in this regard between developing countries as well as between diversely different regions in developing countries (King, 1983; Shaeffer and Nkinyangi, 1983). One significant implication of these differences, especially between developed and developing countries, is for academic researchers to be aware that the conducive research environments surrounding institutions in developed countries (good library facilities, strong laboratory support, advanced data analysis facilities and consultancy services, experience in participating in research) are totally dissimilar to those of developing countries. Such an awareness could enable researchers to design studies whose conduct will be reflective of the relatively less stimulating research climate in developing



countries. Without this proviso, it may be argued that future studies are likely to be less successful.

The combined use of qualitative and quantitative sets of data seems to have raised certain conceptual and methodological issues, notably the objective analysis of the results. These problems did not apply to the analysis of pre-coded quantitative data because responses from these instruments were quite easily quantified by assigning numerical values to verbal responses. But the analysis of qualitative data presented problems since the various response categories were determined after the results were obtained.

In trying to quantify qualitative data it is either possible for researchers to mis-analyse it by selecting wrong response categories or to tacitly impose their preconceived response categories on the data. As noted earlier, this study attempted to prevent some of these artefacts by allowing other people to analyse the qualitative data. But despite this, some of the response categories derived from the qualitative data in Chapters 4 and 5 appear vague or inappropriate. These problems highlight the need for researchers to be equipped with thorough knowledge and skills in data analysis and to try to involve several experienced people in the process of analysis. It is also important to note that the conduct of such analyses would require researchers to exercise such skills as meticulous care or attention, consistency, constant reflections, honesty and critical self-appraisal. This could enable initially established response categories to be frequently re-examined and questioned before accepting them and for unintended response categories which may emerge to be given due consideration.

If these precautions were taken, findings obtained from quantifying qualitative data might be valid and widely generalisable.

Other notable problems of the investigation were the inability to obtain main data capable of analysis according to the previous plans outlined in Chapter 3 and absence of marked regional differences in most of the key areas investigated. Whereas both these results were previously explained in terms of the small size of the samples (which restricted the level of statistical analysis) and higher instrumental orientation to the CEE (which caused most of the views of the regional groups to converge rather than differ on varying gradations ranging from positive to negative), it appears as if the findings might also be attributed to inadequacies in methodology and instrumentation.

This latter observation seems to be genuine because both of these shortcomings could perhaps have been prevented or minimised through the use of research instruments with a stronger discriminating power than those used in this study. Such instruments must not only comprise open-ended items, but should also have, for example, fixed-alternative items, scale items, rank-order items and check-list items. Fixed-alternative items allow respondents to select their responses from a given number of alternatives while scale items enable them to indicate the degree of agreement or disagreement on a wide continuum. Rank-order items make it possible for them to select their choices based on a determined preferred order and, for check-list items, they are able to choose amongst a given number of alternatives one of the responses with which they agree.

Therefore, despite the respondent groups' strong attachments to the CEE, if most of the instruments used in this dissertation had these varying items, it might have been possible to secure a more satisfactory spread of opinion in the investigations. Also, there could perhaps be greater chances for the main data to be amenable to analysis in accordance with the conventions of the two research traditions of the dissertation. In particular, the main data would have been analysed to provide (some of the previously intended results) a cause-effect interrelationship study in which respondent groups' orientation to the CEE and primary education in general might be conceptually linked to their experiences or views about teaching and learning at upper primary (in the case of children their approaches to learning) in order to determine learning outcomes.

However, as we might have observed, the majority of instruments used in this study had mostly open-ended items. These instruments had less potential discriminating power, especially in minimising the convergence of opinions held by the regional samples as well as the kinds of detailed statistical analyses described above. These problems in instrumentation tend to suggest that the design of efficient instruments requires the possession and use of technical competencies and skills in identifying and cataloguing suitable items related to stated objectives of a particular study. The problems also seem to indicate that much more time should have been given to the pre-testing of the instruments. Thus, despite the short time available for the conduct of this study, if a longer period had been devoted to pilot work, it might have been possible to determine the extent to which the instruments were capable of



being used to show differences in response between the groups concerned. The problems also highlight the importance of giving due consideration to data analysis throughout the planning stage of any study. This is likely to make the data collected amenable to the programme of analysis laid down.

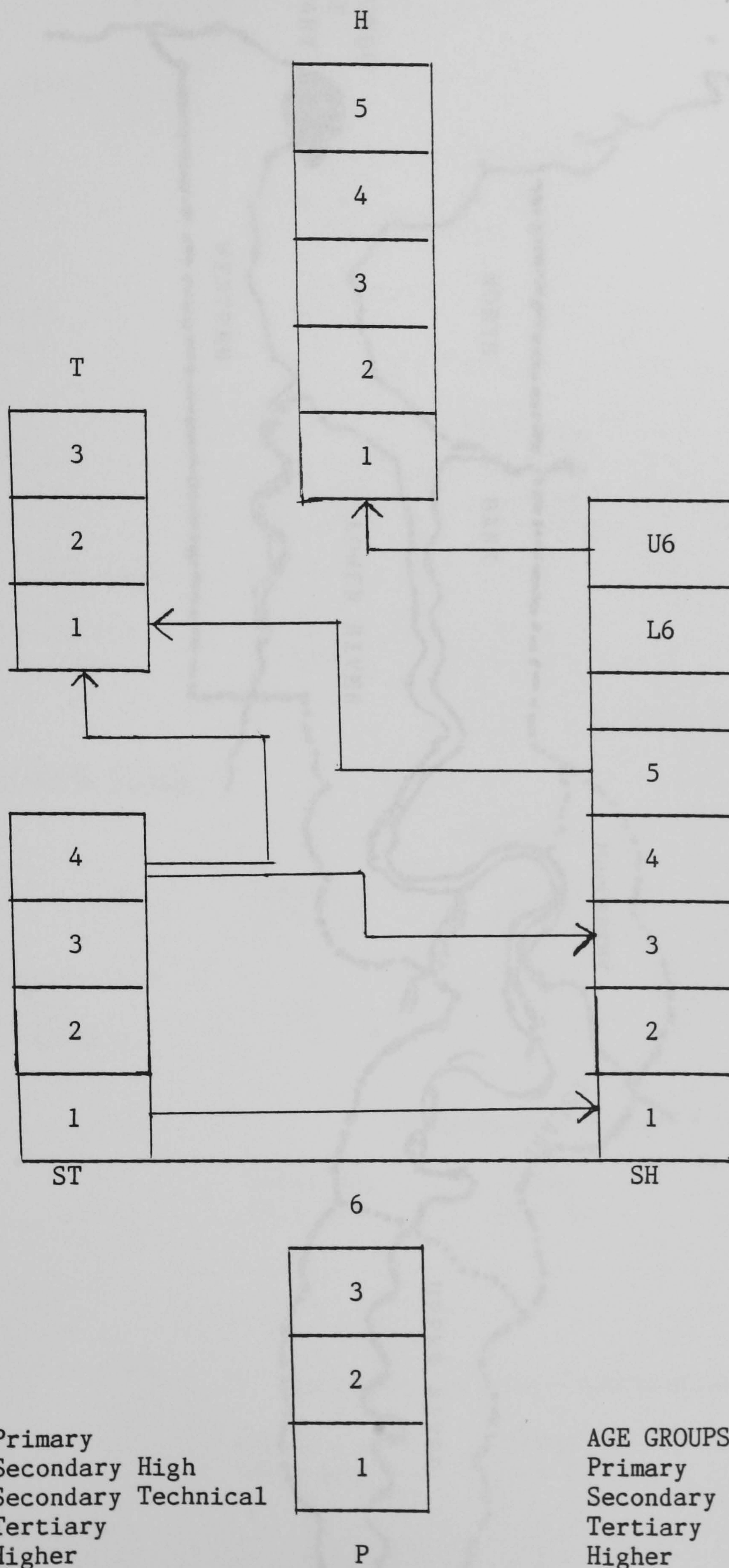
On the whole, the problems discussed here seem to emphasise the importance for researchers to make a realistic assessment of the research capacity of the countries in which studies may be launched as well as their own research capacity (in terms of the efficient design, conduct and analysis of investigations) prior to beginning fieldwork research. This suggestion seems to be more important for investigations to be conducted in developing countries, given that our discussions in this section in particular show that it is in these countries rather than in developed countries that the environment for research appears to be less favourable.

## APPENDICES

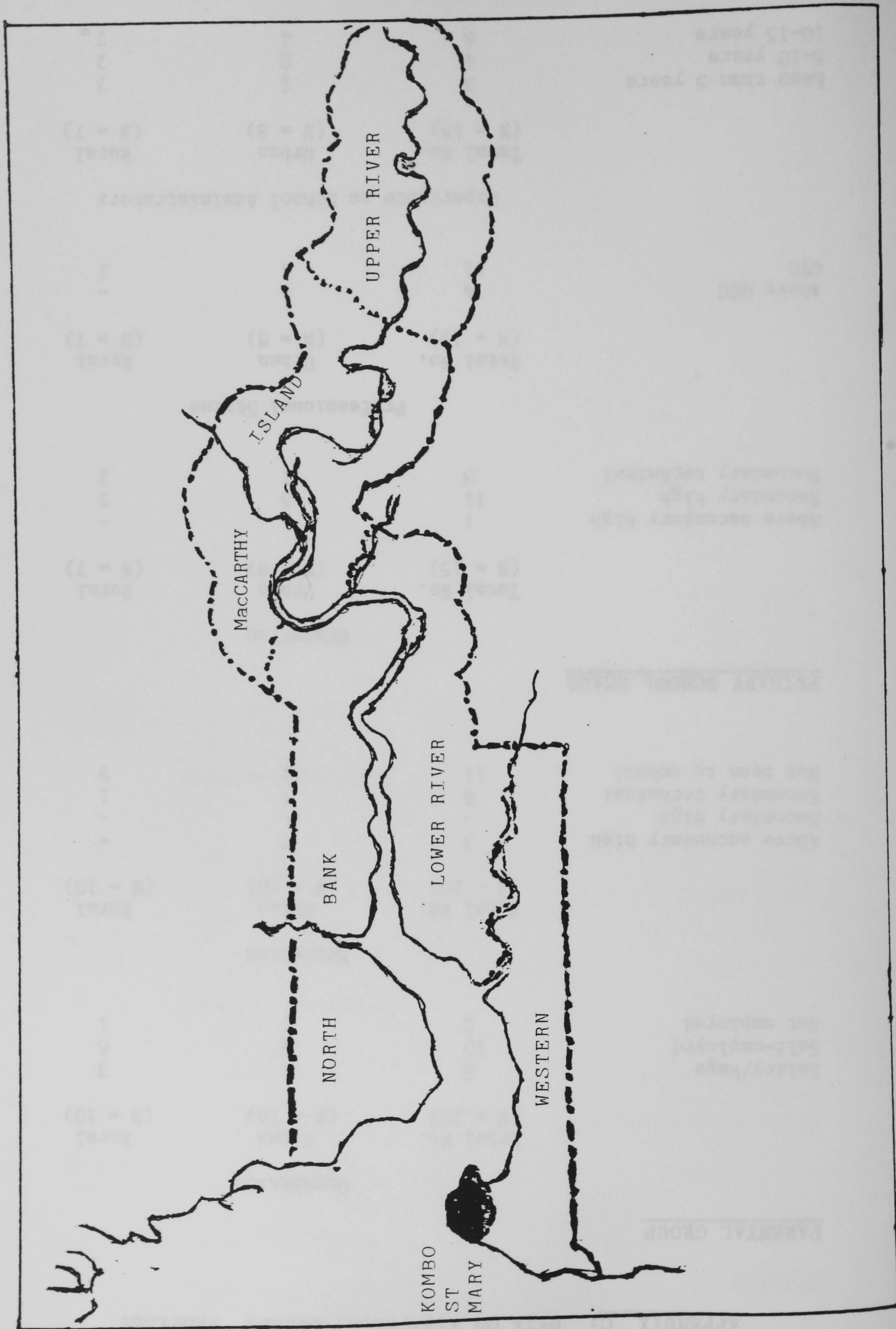
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# APPENDIX A: THE GAMBIAN EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM









## APPENDIX C: DATA ON RESPONDENT GROUPS' PROFILES

### PARENTAL GROUP

	Occupation		
	Total No. (N = 20)	Urban (N = 10)	Rural (N = 10)
Salary/Wage	8	5	3
Self-employed	10	4	6
Not employed	2	1	1

	Education		
	Total No. (N = 20)	Urban (N = 10)	Rural (N = 10)
Above secondary high	3	3	-
Secondary high	-	-	-
Secondary technical	6	5	1
Not been to school	11	2	9

### PRIMARY SCHOOL HEADS

	Education		
	Total No. (N = 15)	Urban (N = 8)	Rural (N = 7)
Above secondary high	1	1	-
Secondary high	11	6	5
Secondary technical	3	1	2

	Professional Status		
	Total No. (N = 15)	Urban (N = 8)	Rural (N = 7)
Above GTC	4	4	-
GTC	11	4	7

	Experience as School Administrators		
	Total No. (N = 15)	Urban (N = 8)	Rural (N = 7)
Less than 5 years	5	2	3
5-10 years	4	2	2
10-15 years	6	4	2

## TEACHERS

### Education

	Total No. (N = 18)	Urban (N = 10)	Rural (N = 8)
Above secondary high	1	1	-
Secondary high	9	5	4
Secondary technical	8	4	4

### Professional Status

	Total No. (N = 18)	Urban (N = 10)	Rural (N = 8)
Above GTC	1	1	-
GTC	11	8	3
UQT	6	1	5

### Teaching Experience

	Total No. (N = 18)	Urban (N = 10)	Rural (N = 8)
3-5 years	1	1	-
5-10 years	4	2	2
10-15 years	5	2	3
15-20 years	6	4	2



**FORM ONE PUPILS**

Category	Total No.	Parental Education		
		Total %	Urban	Rural
Above high school	10	4	4	2
High school	40	17	16	16
Secondary technical	170	71	77	45
Primary education	6	2.5	-	14
Not been to school	15	6	3	23

Category	Total No.	Parental Occupation		
		Total %	Urban	Rural
Professional	25	10	10	11
Administrative	9	4	3	7
Executive	20	8	8	9
Clerical	40	17.5	18	11
Skilled	17	7	7	7
Semi-skilled	21	9	9	9
Manual	60	25	26	18
Self-employed	20	8	7	6
Not employed	29	12	12	11

**PRIMARY SIX CHILDREN**

Category	Total No.	Parental Education		
		Total %	Urban	Rural
Above high school	49	13.6	20.4	0.8
High school	87	24.2	31.9	9.7
Secondary technical	20	5.6	5.5	5.6
Primary education	17	4.7	5.5	3.2
Not been to school	186	51.8	36.6	80.6

Category	Total No.	Parental Occupation		
		Total %	Urban	Rural
Professional	39	10.9	16.2	0.8
Administrative	11	3.1	4.7	-
Executive	20	5.6	8.5	-
Clerical	56	15.6	19.6	8.1
Skilled	12	3.3	2.6	4.8
Semi-skilled	20	5.6	7.2	2.4
Manual	123	34.3	11.5	77.4
Self-employed	62	17.3	23.0	6.5
Not employed	16	4.5	6.8	-

APPENDIX D

ATTITUDE QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PRIMARY SIX CHILDREN

SECTION I: This section is about yourself. Please fill in the necessary information.

1. Today's date:
2. Your name:
3. Date of birth:
4. Nationality:
5. Religion:
6. Region:
7. Name of school:
8. Class:
9. Tribe:
10. Languages used at home:
11. Education of parent or guardian:

Parent/Guardian	Level of Education attained
Tick the highest level of education attained by your parent/guardian	Not been to school
	Primary education
	Junior secondary education
	High school education
	University education

## GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

### SECTION 2:

Now read the following points very carefully.

1. Use pencil or pen to write your answers.
2. Try to answer all the questions.
3. The instruction following each question explains how you should answer the question. Read the instruction very carefully before attempting to answer the question.
4. If you need help, put up your hand.

### SECTION 3:

#### QUESTIONS

1. A list of school subjects is given below. In group A, tick all the boxes corresponding to the subjects which you have taken in Primary Five. In group B, tick all the boxes corresponding to the subjects which you are taking in Primary Six.

#### GROUP A

Subjects taken in Primary Five

Language  
Arithmetic  
Composition  
Physical Education  
Religious Knowledge  
Arts and Crafts  
Koranic Studies  
Homecraft  
Singing/Music  
Gardening  
Science  
Social Studies  
Other subjects - write  
these subjects below

#### GROUP B

Subjects taken in Primary Six

2. Some pupils have to take the Common Entrance Examination more than once if they are to do well. How many times did you sit the Common Entrance Examination?

Tick one box

Never before  
Once  
Twice  
Three times  
Four times



3. If you are unable to continue to high school, would you be prepared to repeat the Common Entrance Examination?
- Yes  
No  
Not certain
- Tick one box
4. In order to have good results in the Common Entrance Examination, it is necessary to:
- Work very hard  
Study only the subjects important to the examination  
Understand your studies and lessons in school  
Be lucky  
Be clever  
Learn things by heart which will help in the examination
- Tick one box
5. Who is most likely to worry if you do not do well in the Common Entrance Examination?
- Your teacher  
Your friends  
Your parents or guardian  
Yourself  
Other people: write these below
- Tick one box
6. Do you attend any private study classes?
- Yes  
No
- Tick one box
7. What is a good job?
- A job that is easy to do.  
A job with better chances of promotion.  
A job that is interesting to do.  
A well paid job.  
A job that is challenging to one's skills and abilities.  
A job that is permanent.
- Tick only three boxes
8. Are there good jobs for primary leavers in the area in which you live?
- Yes  
No  
Not certain
- Tick one box

9. Are there good jobs for primary leavers elsewhere in the country?

Tick one box

Yes  
No  
Not certain

10. If answer is no, can you explain why?

Primary leavers are too young to be considered for good jobs.  
Employers prefer secondary leavers.  
The Primary Testimonial cannot secure good jobs.  
A pass in the Common Entrance Examination cannot secure good jobs.  
Other reasons: write these below.

11. How would you describe a successful pupil?

APPENDIX E

LEARNING AND STUDY-SKILLS QUESTIONNAIRE FOR  
PRIMARY SIX PUPILS

Answer all the following questions by putting a tick in the box that you agree with.

1. I often study most when the test is near:

Yes  
No  
Not certain

2. Class tests always make me confused and sad:

Yes  
No  
Not certain

3. I find it difficult to ask questions in class:

Yes  
No  
Not certain

4. I do not normally discuss my problems with friends in class:

Yes  
No  
Not certain



## APPENDIX F

### SENTENCE-COMPLETION TEST ITEMS

1. In class, our teacher paid more attention to pupils who ...
2. I like doing multiple choice questions because ...
3. In order to understand what I have studied, I always ...
4. If I come across a problem that is difficult to do, I ...
5. In order not to forget what I have studied, I try to ...
6. When someone gets a low mark, our teacher ...
7. When someone gets a better mark than me, I ...
8. When someone gives a wrong answer to a question, our teacher ...
9. During examinations I become ...
10. The subjects I liked to study most in Primary Six were ...
11. Pupils who do not do well in the Common Entrance Examination are those who ...
12. The Common Entrance Examination is important because ...
13. The subjects I did not like to study most in Primary Six were ...
14. In class we learned the following subjects by heart ...
15. In order to do well in the Common Entrance Examination, it is necessary to ...
16. I think the main functions of primary schools are ...
17. A successful pupil is someone who ...

### PERSONAL INFORMATION

Name:	Sex:
School:	Place of birth:
Class:	Occupation of parents
Region:	or guardian:

## SENTENCE-COMPLETION TEST FOR PRIMARY SIX PUPILS

Complete the following sentences in your own words:

1. In class, our teacher paid more attention to pupils who ...
2. I like doing multiple choice questions because ...
3. In order to understand what I have studied, I always ...
4. If I come across a problem that is difficult to do, I ...
5. In order not to forget what I have studied, I try to ...
6. When someone gets a low mark, our teacher ...
7. When someone gets a better mark than me, I ...
8. When someone gives a wrong answer to a question, our teacher ...
9. During examinations I become ...
10. The subjects I liked to study most in Primary Six were ...
11. Pupils who do not do well in the Common Entrance Examination are those who ...

## APPENDIX G

### PARENT INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

#### SECTION I: PERSONAL DETAILS OF RESPONDENT

Name:	Sex:
Serial No:	Age:
Address:	Education:
Region:	Language of interview:
	Date:

#### SECTION 2:

1.
  - a) What is the name of your child?
  - b) How old was .... when he/she first went to school?
2.
  - a) Do you know the subjects that .... does in school?
  - b) Would you like him/her to study other subjects?
  - c) If answer is no, why?
  - d) If answer is yes, which subjects?
3.
  - a) What things are in the house that help his/her studies?
  - b) If answer is none, why?
  - c) If answer is yes, could you give the titles of the books?
4. What functions do you think primary schools should perform?
5. How would you describe the following:
  - a) a good school?
  - b) a good teacher?
  - c) A successful pupil?
6.
  - a) Why is .... staying on in school to complete the primary course?
  - b) If .... fails to enter high school or secondary school would you advise him/her to repeat the Common Entrance Examination next year?
  - c) If answer is no, why? If answer is yes, up to how many times?
  - d) Why would you want .... to repeat the Common Entrance Examination?
7.
  - a) What do you think will help .... to perform better in the Common Entrance Examination?
  - b) What help do you provide in preparing him/her for the Common Entrance Examination?
    - 1) Purchase of crammers?
    - 2) Negotiation of private tutoring?



8. What paid jobs are available in your area for:
- a) primary school leavers
  - b) secondary leavers
  - c) Could primary leavers secure paid jobs elsewhere in the country?
  - d) If answer is no, why?  
If answer is yes, which jobs are available to them?

## APPENDIX H

### HEADMASTER/MISTRESS INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

#### SECTION I: PERSONAL DETAILS OF RESPONDENT

Name:	Sex:
Serial No:	Status:
School:	Age:
Date:	Education:
	Region:

#### SECTION 2:

1. What factors do you consider when assigning teachers to:
  - a) Primary Five
  - b) Primary Six
  - c) Are any of these considerations related to maximising examination success?
2.
  - a) Are there any differences between the subjects that are available in Primaries Five and Six?
  - b) Are there any differences between the textbooks used in Primaries Five and Six?
3. What functions do you think primary schools should perform?
4. How would you describe a successful pupil?
5.
  - a) How do you decide on those who are to repeat the Common Entrance Examination?
  - b) Do you advise pupils who do not do well in the Common Entrance Examination to repeat?
  - c) If no, can you explain why?  
If yes, why would you encourage resits?
6. What do you think helps pupils to do better in the Common Entrance Examination?
  - a) Purchase of crammers?
  - b) Having a good memory?
  - c) Attendance at extra study classes?
  - d) Doing hard work?
7.
  - a) What help does the school provide for the Examination class?
  - b) Are any of the funds in the school used to buy examination materials?

8. What kind of things do primary six teachers and pupils do after the Common Entrance Examination?
9. How important is success in the Common Entrance Examination for:
  - a) The school's reputation?
  - b) The careers of teaching staff?
  - c) The pupils' careers?
10. Would you agree that schools tend to concentrate more on preparing pupils for the Common Entrance Examination than pursuing other educational objectives?
11.
  - a) What is your opinion with regard to the examination?
  - b) Does the examination sample adequately the aims and content of primary education?
  - c) Suppose you had the opportunity, what changes would you make regarding:
    - 1) The content and format of the examination?
    - 2) The procedures used to select pupils to secondary schools?
12.
  - a) What paid jobs are available in your area for:
    - 1) primary leavers?
    - 2) secondary leavers?
  - b) Could primary leavers secure paid jobs elsewhere in the country?

If answer is no, why?    If answer is yes, which jobs are available to them.



## APPENDIX I

### TEACHER INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

#### SECTION I: PERSONAL DETAILS OF RESPONDENT

Name:	Status:
School:	Education:
Sex:	Professional training:
Age:	Date:
Region:	

#### SECTION 2:

1. Do you give pupils homework?  
If no, why not. If yes, in what subjects?
2.
  - a) How many times a week do you use tests?
  - b) What is the format most often used?
  - c) What are the main reasons for using tests?
3. How do pupils react to doing multiple-choice questions?
4. Which pupils would you normally concentrate on most in class?  
Can you explain why?
5. How do you encourage them to ask questions in class?
6.
  - a) Do you encourage pupils to compete for marks?
  - b) How do pupils react to:
    - 1) low marks?
    - 2) high marks?
7. Do you encourage pupils to learn from each other?
8. If pupils give wrong answers to your questions, what do you do?
9. How would you describe a successful pupil?
10. What functions do you think primary schools should perform?
11. Would you agree that drills on previous Common Entrance Examination papers reinforce memorisation and rote learning?
12. What type of teaching do you use most:
  - a) whole class?
  - b) groups?
  - c) individual?
13. What activities do you and pupils do which help to develop:
  - a) problem-solving learning?
  - b) understanding?
  - c) creative learning?

14. a) What is your opinion with regard to the Common Entrance Examination?
- b) Does the Examination adequately sample the aims and content of primary education?
- c) Suppose you had the opportunity, what changes would you make regarding:
- 1) the content and format of the examination?
- 2) the procedures used to select pupils to secondary schools?
15. What do you think helps pupils to do better in the Common Entrance Examination?
- a) Purchase of crammers?
- b) Having a good memory?
- c) Attending extra study classes?
- d) Doing hard work?
16. Are there subjects you would like to teach but are unable to due to the demands of the Common Entrance Examination?
17. Do you normally give extra tuition to pupils? If not, why not?
- If yes: a) Why do you run these classes?
- b) Is the tuition free or how much does each pupil pay?
18. How important is pupils' success in the Common Entrance Examination to:
- a) your own career?
- b) pupils' careers?
19. Do you give pupils practice on previous Common Entrance Examination papers? If not, why not?
- If yes: a) How often?
- b) Would these exercises help them to do better in the Common Entrance Examination?
20. What things do pupils learn by heart which might help them to do better in the Common Entrance Examination?
21. Do you encourage pupils who do not do well in the Common Entrance Examination to repeat?
- a) No: Why not?
- b) Yes: Why?

22. a) What paid jobs are available in your area for:
- 1) primary leavers?
  - 2) secondary leavers?
- b) Could primary leavers secure paid jobs elsewhere in the country?
- No: Why not?    Yes: Which jobs are available to them?



APPENDIX J

PRIMARY SCHOOL HEADS' SUPPORT FOR  
COMMON ENTRANCE EXAMINATION PREPARATIONS

Qs: H 7a and b

Data (Multiple Responses)

Response	Total No. (N = 15)	Urban (N = 8)	Rural (N = 7)
Provision of CEE documentation	13	6	7
Organisation of practice classes	10	6	4
Provision of accommodation	8	5	3

APPENDIX K

TEACHERS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS PRACTICE CLASSES

Teachers' responses to, "Do you normally give extra tuition to pupils?"

Q: T 17a

Data

Response	Total No. (N = 18)	Urban (N = 10)	Rural (N = 8)
Yes	17	9	8
No	1	1	-

Teachers' responses to, "Is it free?"

Q: T 17c

	Total No. (N = 18)	Urban (N = 10)	Rural (N = 8)
No	9	8	1
Yes	8	1	7
No extra tuition	1	1	-

## APPENDIX L

### A COMPARISON BETWEEN PRIMARY SIX PUPILS PREPARED TO REPEAT THE COMMON ENTRANCE EXAMINATION AND THEIR PREVIOUS RESITS

Source of data: cross tabulation of number of previous repeats and decision to repeat again.

Data

No. of Previous Resits (N = 359)

Responses	0	1	2	3
Yes	97	82	20	1
Not certain	28	16	2	-
No	18	43	11	4



APPENDIX M

Primary Six pupils' responses to, "Do you attend any private study classes?"

Q: PQA 15a

Data

Response	Total % (N = 359)	Urban % (N = 235)	Rural % (N = 124)
Yes	93	92	94
No	3	8	6

APPENDIX N:

Primary Six pupils' responses to, "Who is most likely to worry if you do not do well in the CEE?"

Q: PSAQ 12

Data

Response	Total % (N = 359)	Urban % (N = 235)	Rural % (N = 124)
Self	47	43	59
Caretaker	40	45	33
Teacher	9	11	6
Friends	4	1	2

## APPENDIX O

### NOTES ON THE COMMON CENTRAL EXAMINATION

This examination is viewed with much interest in The Gambia because success in it mainly determines primary leavers' access to post-primary schools. It is therefore a very competitive and centralised selective device. Primary leavers who are below the age of 15 years and have not repeated the examination more than once are usually allowed to take it. However, it is very difficult to adhere strictly to these regulations particularly because of the social value associated with success in the examination which will be considered later in this discussion.

In The Gambia, most public school examinations, including CEE, are administered and conducted on behalf of the Education Department by the WAEC. Founded in 1950 by several Anglophone countries in West Africa, the council serves as an inter-regional organ of cooperation in matters related to public examinations and education generally amongst the member states. And as with other examinations conducted by the WAEC on behalf of the countries concerned, The Gambian CEE not only functions as a selection mechanism, but in addition its preparations are supposed to provide appropriate knowledge and experience for pupils.

The examination papers for the CEE are prepared by a panel of setters appointed by the Education Department and the WAEC. This comprises personnel from the CDC, schools and voluntary bodies concerned with primary education such as the GTU. Examination questions prepared by the panel are then pilot tested in Primary Five classes by WAEC official members; these tests enable items that are suitable for future use to be item-banked by the council.

The main subjects taken in the examination are: English, Arithmetic, Verbal Aptitude and Quantitative Aptitude. Apart from the essay, the other papers contain 40 multiple-choice questions, and for each question, 5 alternative answers are offered. Candidates usually record answers by filling in blank spaces on specially provided answer sheets. Weightings for the various papers are: English 80, Arithmetic 80, Verbal Aptitude 100 and Quantitative Aptitude 100, showing some deliberate bias in favour of the Aptitude papers.

Every year the CEE is taken, usually between May and June, and the results are published either in August or September. Schools presenting candidates to the examination serve as examination centres. Supervision and invigilation of the examination is often handled on behalf of the WAEC by senior staff members of the Education Department, primary school heads and teachers. Examination scripts belonging to The Gambia are often sent to Free Town, Sierra Leone, where they are analysed by computer. On receipt of the final results from Free Town, the WAEC transmits them to the Education Department and to all participating schools.

Unlike other Gambian public school examinations such as GCE examinations, there are no standard pass or fail marks attached to



the results of the CEE. Instead, cut-off marks, based on aggregate scores earned by candidates, are determined and used to select candidates for post-primary schools. Some of these marks were given in Chapter 1 of this dissertation.

The CEE is especially significant because other than guaranteeing entry into post-primary schools for primary leavers, candidates who perform outstandingly in the examination can win a government scholarship award provided under the merit-order list scheme instituted by the Education Department. This enables pupils to pursue a full secondary high school course free of charge. This dual advantage, associated with doing very well in the examination, creates considerable pressures and anxieties as far as parents, pupils and teachers are concerned.

APPENDIX P

THE TYPE OF CLASS ORGANISATION MOSTLY USED  
BY TEACHERS WHEN TEACHING

Q: T 12

Data

Response	Total No. (N = 18)	Urban (N = 10)	Rural (N = 8)
Whole class	15	8	7
Groups	3	2	1

APPENDIX Q

PAST CEE PAPERS



(To be answered at the top part of the answer sheet)

**Instructions**

Work the following either in your head or on the paper. Choose the correct answer from the five choices lettered A to E and shade on the answer sheet the space which bears the same letter as the answer you have chosen.

1.  $2322 + 106 - 2100 + 53$  equals

- A. 1229.
- B. 852.
- C. 381.
- D. 275.
- E. 169.

2. Simplify  $3\frac{1}{3} + (1\frac{1}{3} \div \frac{1}{3}) \div 2\frac{1}{4}$ .

- A.  $7\frac{5}{12}$
- B.  $4\frac{2}{3}$
- C.  $4\frac{1}{12}$
- D.  $1\frac{5}{8}$
- E.  $1\frac{5}{12}$

3. Express  $\frac{24}{128}$  as a ratio in its simplest form.

- A. 3 : 8
- B. 3 : 16
- C. 8 : 3
- D. 16 : 3
- E. 24 : 128

4. Express four hundred and three thousand and two in figures.

- A. 40 032
- B. 43 002
- C. 400 302
- D. 403 002
- E. 403 020

5. Mr. N'Jie walks from his house to his office every morning at a speed of 5 kilometres per hour. If his office is 1 kilometre away from his house, how long does it take him to walk to his office?

- A. 5 minutes
- B. 6 minutes
- C. 8 minutes
- D. 10 minutes
- E. 12 minutes

6. Two sisters, Sirra and Begay, shared D55.00 in the ratio 6 : 5 respectively. What was Begay's share of the money?

- A. D5.00
- B. D9.40
- C. D11.00
- D. D25.00
- E. D30.00

7. Aminata spent 1 hour doing 12 problems. What was the average time she spent on each problem?

- A. 5 minutes
- B. 6 minutes
- C. 8 minutes
- D. 10 minutes
- E. 12 minutes

8. What is the L.C.M. of the following numbers: 4, 30, 15?

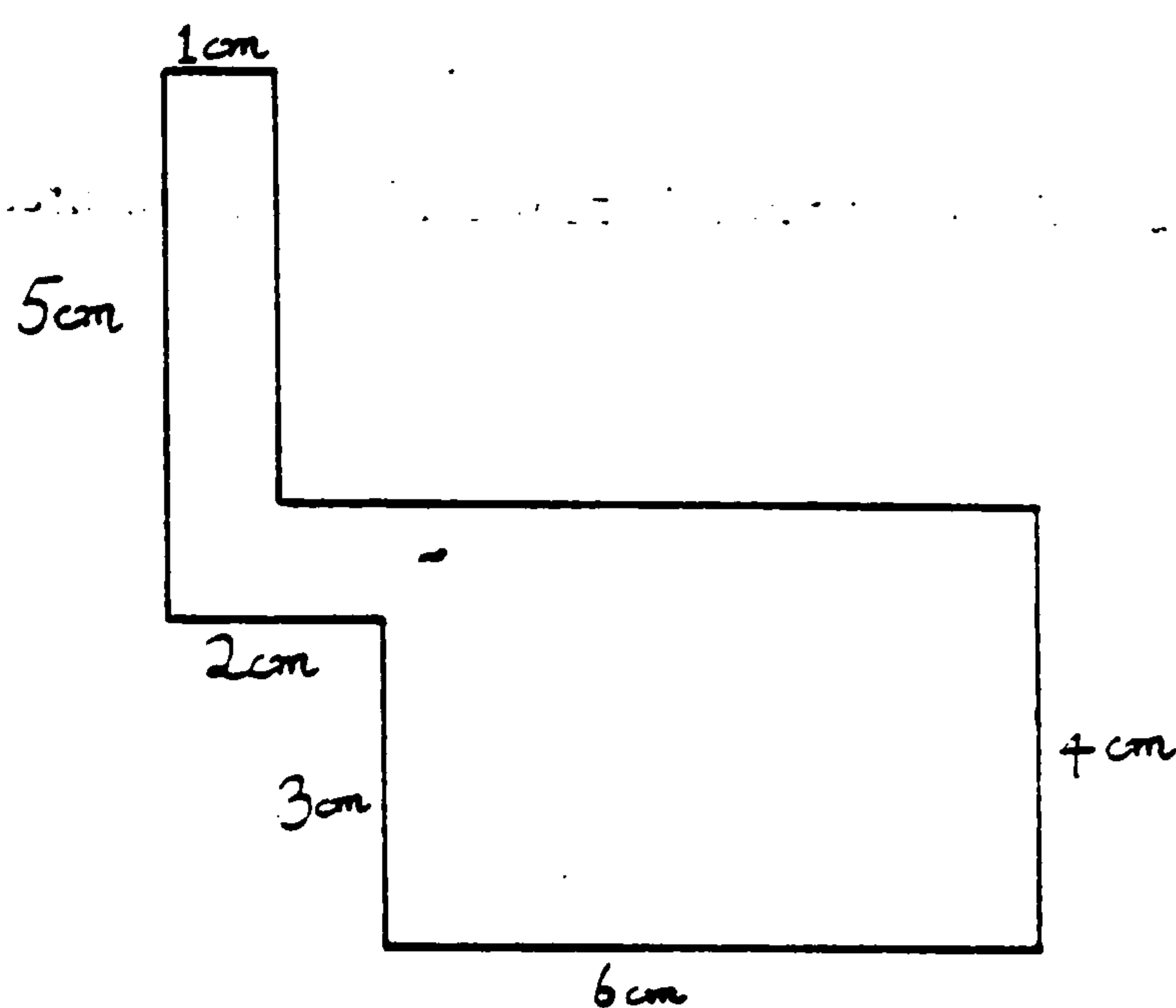
- A. 2
- B. 3
- C. 5
- D. 30
- E. 60

9. Simplify  $5\frac{2}{3} \div 3(1\frac{1}{4} \div 2\frac{1}{2})$ .

- A.  $5\frac{2}{3}$
- B.  $3\frac{2}{15}$
- C.  $3\frac{2}{3}$
- D.  $\frac{22}{3}$
- E.  $\frac{2}{3}$

10. What is  $\frac{1}{8}$  of D500.00?

- A. D4.00
- B. D12.50
- C. D40.00
- D. D62.50
- E. D125.00



The sides of the figure in the diagram above are measured in centimetres. Use the diagram to answer Questions 11 and 12.

11. What is the area of the figure?

- A.  $21 \text{ cm}^2$
- B.  $30 \text{ cm}^2$
- C.  $34 \text{ cm}^2$
- D.  $37 \text{ cm}^2$
- E.  $40 \text{ cm}^2$

12. What is the perimeter of the figure?

- A. 19 cm
- B. 20 cm
- C. 21 cm
- D. 28 cm
- E. 32 cm

13. Express  $2\frac{1}{3}$  as a fraction of 33.

- A.  $\frac{1}{15}$
- B.  $\frac{1}{3}$
- C.  $\frac{1}{3}$
- D.  $\frac{1}{33}$
- E.  $\frac{1}{11}$



(To be answered at the top part of the answer sheet)

## PART I

## Instructions

Read Passages A and B carefully and answer the questions which follow them. Shade on your answer sheet the answer space which bears the same letter as the answer you have chosen.

## PASSAGE A

Silas was sitting in his office one Friday when a man came in. He was in a terrible state. His hands and face were bleeding. Silas asked the man how the accident had happened. 'It wasn't an accident, Doctor,' the man said. 'It was fate.' He said he had been to see a fortune teller who told him that Friday would be a dangerous day for him and advised him not to travel that day.

Silas was scornful. 'Surely, you don't believe in fortune tellers,' he said. 'Yes, I do,' the man said. 'Especially after what happened today. I had intended to go to Dakar today but when the fortune teller warned me not to travel, I postponed the trip.'

He had thought that if he stayed at home nothing would happen to him. After breakfast, he had locked the doors, shut the windows and returned to bed to pass what he thought would be a safe day. 'How did you get hurt in bed?' Silas asked. 'As you know,' he replied, 'it has been very windy today. The wind broke a branch off a big tree near my house and it crashed into my bedroom window. The broken glass cut my hands and face.' Silas finished treating the man. 'Your wounds should heal in a few days,' he said. 'And forget this nonsense about fortune tellers.'

Seconds after the man had left, Silas heard a cry. He went out and found the man lying on the ground. He had slipped on the step and broken his arm.

1. According to the passage, Silas was

- A. in a terrible state.
- B. wounded and bleeding.
- C. a fortune teller.
- D. a dangerous man.
- E. a doctor.

2. Why did the man go to see Silas?

- A. Because Silas was a fortune teller
- B. Because he wanted some money
- C. Because he wanted to get his wounds treated
- D. Because it was Friday
- E. Because he wanted to tell him about the fortune teller

3. According to the passage, which one of the following statements is true?

- A. The man did not go to Dakar because the fortune teller told him not to travel.
- B. The man went to Dakar because he wanted to travel.
- C. The man went to Dakar because he believed the fortune teller.
- D. The man did not go to Dakar because he did not believe the fortune teller.
- E. The man went to Dakar because it was Friday.

4. According to the passage, which one of the following statements is true?

- A. It was a safe and comfortable day.
- B. The man left the house that day.
- C. The man locked himself in for fear of thieves.
- D. The man stayed indoors the whole day.
- E. The man knew that the bedroom window would be broken.



5. How did the man get injured?
  - A. Fate cut his hands and face.
  - B. A broken branch cut his hands and face.
  - C. The window fell on him and cut his hands and face.
  - D. The broken glass from the window cut his hands and face.
  - E. The wind blew pieces of glass at him that cut his hands and face.
  
6. Why was Silas scornful? He thought the man was
  - A. too intelligent.
  - B. too honest.
  - C. unhappy.
  - D. foolish.
  - E. right.
  
7. Why was the man lying on the ground after leaving Silas?
  - A. A big tree had crashed into his bedroom.
  - B. He had slipped on the step and broken an arm.
  - C. He could not see because his face was cut.
  - D. He thought it was safe to lie down.
  - E. He wanted Silas to believe his story.

#### PASSAGE B

The coconut tree is very useful. People in the tropics depend on it: they make roofs for their houses from the leaves; and fishermen take fibres from the tops of coconut trees and make them into rope as well as fishing nets and sails for their boats. But the nut is the most useful part of the tree. Farmers open the nuts and dry them. There is oil in coconuts which is extracted and then exported, and it is used to make soap, toothpaste, ice-cream, paint and machine oil. The shell of the coconut is useful too. People make it into charcoal which goes into filter tips for cigarettes. Also, there is milk in coconuts which is good to drink and very pure and there are no germs in it. Doctors sometimes used this milk for drip feeds during the war, when they could not get pure water and sugar. When their patients could neither eat nor drink the doctors dripped coconut milk into their bloodstream. The patients lived. Some people say that the coconut is the tree of life. Perhaps they are right.

8. According to the passage people in the tropics make sails for their boats from
  - A. leaves.
  - B. fibres.
  - C. nuts.
  - D. branches.
  - E. rope.
  
9. Which is the most useful part of the coconut tree?
  - A. The oil
  - B. The milk
  - C. The nut
  - D. The fibres
  - E. The shell
  
10. Why do you think farmers open the nuts and dry them?
  - A. Because they taste nicer when they have been dried
  - B. To export the nuts
  - C. To extract oil from the nuts
  - D. To make soap
  - E. To make paint

## PART I

(To be answered on the bottom part of the answer sheet)

## INSTRUCTIONS

In each of the following problems, a word is missing. Choose from the given alternatives the word that most suitably completes the problem.

EXAMPLE: food and water

eat and \_\_\_\_\_

- A. drink    B. dinner    C. talk    D. rice    E. mouth

The missing word is drink. We therefore shade space 'A'

Now answer questions 1-8 in the same way.

## 1. Birds and feathers

Fishes and \_\_\_\_\_

- A. fins  
B. hairs  
C. scales  
D. fur  
E. spikes

## 2. Infants and adults

Young and \_\_\_\_\_

- A. elder  
B. age  
C. chief  
D. old  
E. man

## 3. Appetite and food

Thirst and \_\_\_\_\_

- A. eating  
B. beer  
C. gluttony  
D. drink  
E. taste

## 4. Doctor and hospital

Judge and \_\_\_\_\_

- A. police station  
B. courtroom  
C. jury  
D. jail  
E. prison

5. Fruit and orange  
Insect and .....
- A. lizard
  - B. moth
  - C. cow
  - D. leaf
  - E. banana —

6. Bouquet and flowers  
Navy and .....
- A. sailors—
  - B. farmers
  - C. ladies
  - D. crew
  - E. ship

7. Question and answer  
Problem and .....
- A. calculation
  - B. quotation
  - C. solution
  - D. intuition
  - E. decision

8. King and palace  
Eskimo and .....
- A. hut—
  - B. snow
  - C. igloo
  - D. bamboo
  - E. bungalow

## PART II

### INSTRUCTIONS

In each of the following problems pick out the one word that does not belong to the group.

EXAMPLE: In the group (A) rat (B) lizard (C) dog (D) yam (E) elephant

The word 'yam' does not belong to the group. Therefore the answer is 'D'

Now do questions 9–13 in the same way.

9. A. Accra  
B. Lagos  
C. Freetown  
D. Liberia  
E. Banjul —

10. A. necklace  
B. bracelet  
C. earring  
D. ring—  
E. jewellery

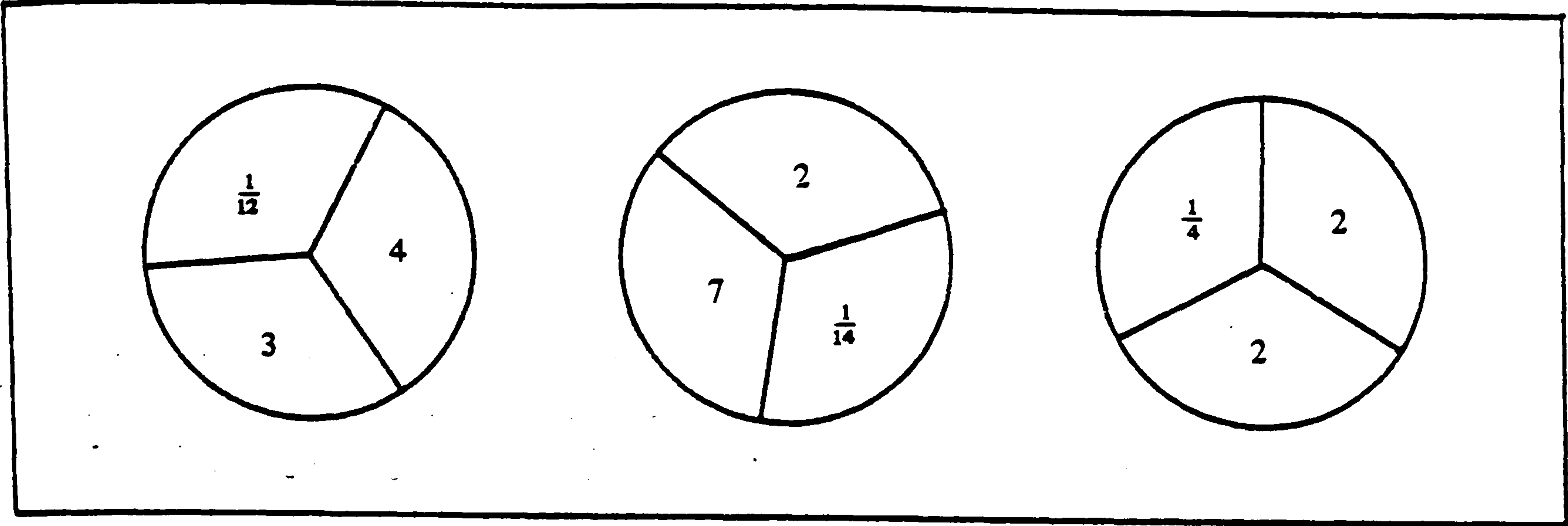
9. A  
10. D  
11. C  
12. B  
13. E



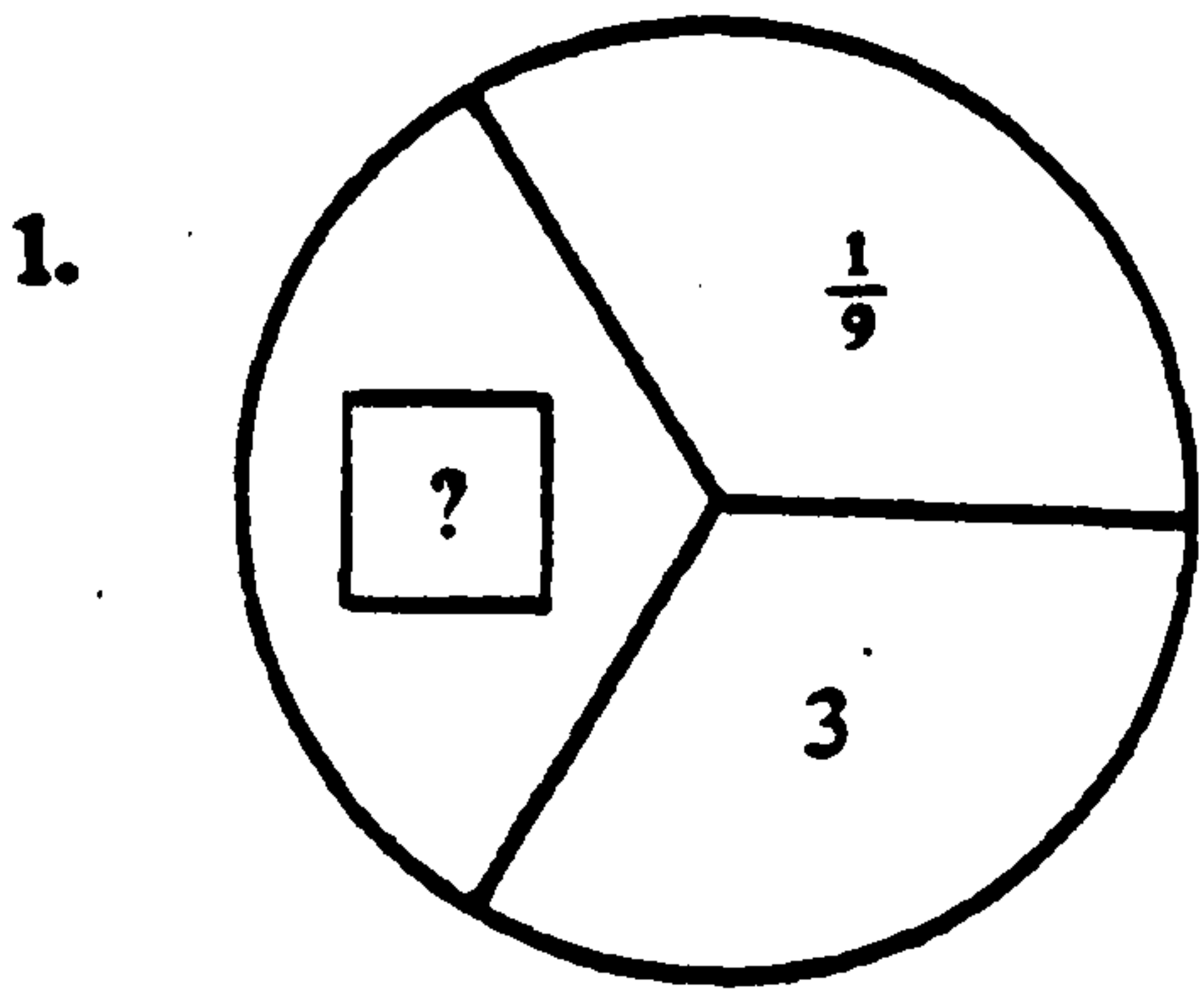
(To be answered at the bottom part of the answer sheet)

PART I

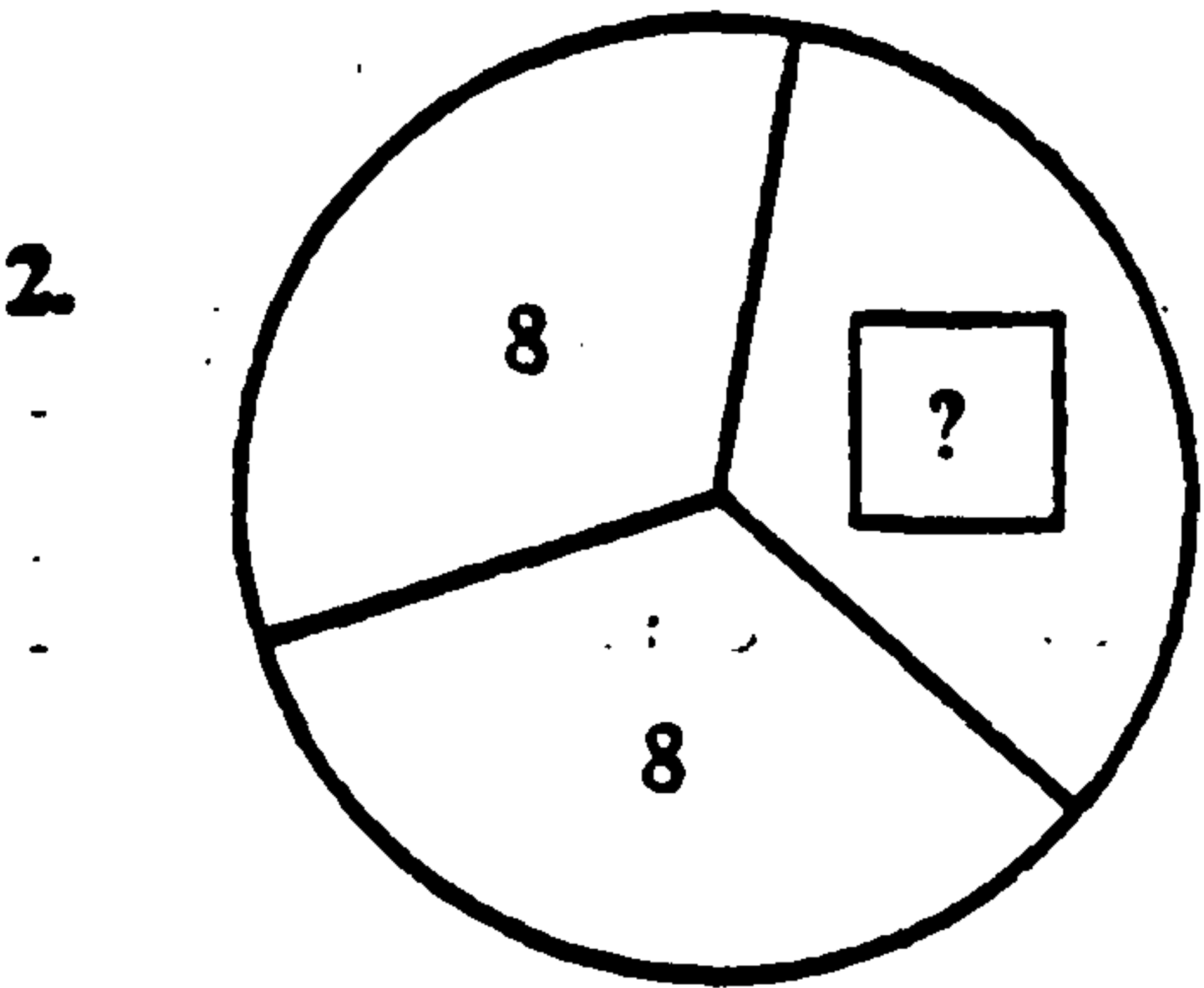
Sample



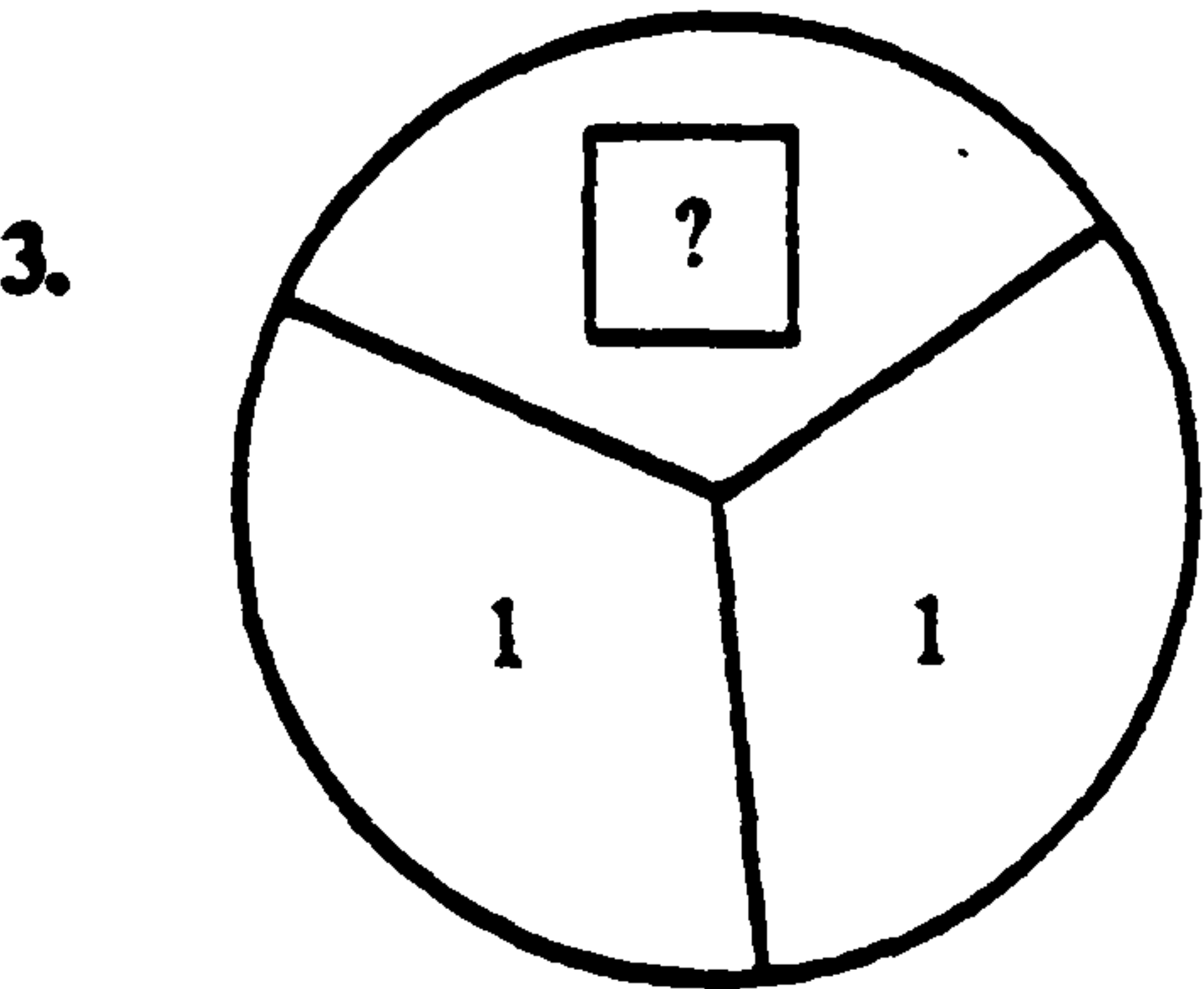
Use this sample to answer Questions 1 to 3.



- A.  $\frac{1}{3}$
- B.  $\frac{1}{4}$
- C. 1
- D. 2
- E. 3



- A.  $\frac{1}{8}$
- B.  $\frac{1}{12}$
- C.  $\frac{1}{14}$
- D.  $\frac{1}{16}$
- E.  $\frac{1}{18}$



- A. 0
- B.  $\frac{1}{2}$
- C. 1
- D. 2
- E. 3

PART II

4. If 7654321 represents the word *binders*, what does 264 represent?

- A. end
- B. rid
- C. din
- D. sin
- E. red

5. If 1234567 represents the word *ditches*, what represents the word *hide*?
- A. 5316
  - B. 4317
  - C. 5217
  - D. 4216
  - E. 5216
6. If 1234561 represents the word *growing*, what does 451 represent?
- A. win
  - B. own
  - C. rig
  - D. won
  - E. wig
7. If 6544321 represents the word *carried*, what represents the word *rice*?
- A. 4326
  - B. 3261
  - C. 4516
  - D. 4362
  - E. 3462

### PART III

Sample

$$\begin{aligned} C_1 &= 1 + 2 = 3 \\ C_5 &= 5 + 6 = 11 \\ C_8 &= 8 + 9 = 17 \end{aligned}$$

Use this sample to answer Questions 8 to 12.

8.  $C_{\boxed{?}} = 25$
- A. 51
  - B. 50
  - C. 26
  - D. 13
  - E. 12
9.  $C_{10} = \boxed{?}$
- A. 21
  - B. 20
  - C. 11
  - D. 10
  - E. 9
10.  $C_{50} = \boxed{?}$
- A. 49
  - B. 50
  - C. 51
  - D. 100
  - E. 101

APPENDIX R

Teachers' responses to the question on whether pupils like to do multiple-choice items

Q: T 3

Data

Response	Total No. (N = 18)	Urban (N = 10)	Rural (N = 8)
They enjoy doing them	13	7	6
They dislike Mathematics items	3	2	1
They dislike Aptitude items	2	1	1



APPENDIX S

Qs: T 2b and c

Data

Test format

Response	Total No. (N = 18)	Urban (N = 10)	Rural (N = 8)
CEE type	16	8	8
CEE and others	2	2	-

Reasons for testing

Response	Total No. (N = 18)	Urban (N = 10)	Rural (N = 8)
To determine pupils' progress in CEE work	14	8	6
To test lesson comprehension	2	2	-
To discover pupils' weaknesses	2	-	2

# APPENDIX T

## EXAMPLE OF EXAM-ORIENTED PRIMARY SIX TIMETABLE

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
8.30 9.00	MATHS	KORANIC	MATHS	VERBAL APTITUDE	MATHS
9.00 9.30	MATHS	LETTER WRITING	MATHS	VERBAL APTITUDE	MATHS
9.30 10.00	LANGUAGE	LETTER WRITING	COMPOSI- TION	LETTER WRITING	KORANIC
10.00 10.30	LANGUAGE	MATHS	COMPOSI- TION	LETTER WRITING	LANGUAGE
10.30 11.00	QUANTITA- TIVE APTITUDE	MATHS	QUANTITA- TIVE APTITUDE	MATHS	LIBRARY STUDIES
11.00 11.30	QUANTITA- TIVE APTITUDE	QUANTITA- TIVE APTITUDE	QUANTITA- TIVE APTITUDE	MATHS	LANGUAGE
11.30 12.00	B	R	E      A	K	GAMES
12.00 12.30	COMPOSI- TION	LANGUAGE	KORANIC	LANGUAGE	XXXXXXXX
12.30 1.00	COMPOSI- TION	LANGUAGE	HOME ECONOMICS	HOME ECONOMICS	XXXXXXXX
1.00 1.30	VERBAL APTITUDE	VERBAL APTITUDE	LANGUAGE	QUANTITA- TIVE APTITUDE	XXXXXXXX
1.30 2.00	VERRAL APTITUDE	SPELLING	VERBAL APTITUDE	QUANTITA- TIVE APTITUDE	XXXXXXXX

APPENDIX U

EXAMPLE OF AN IDEAL PRIMARY SIX SCHOOL TIMETABLE

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
8.15 8.30	READING	READING	READING	READING	READING
8.30 9.00	NUMBER	NUMBER	P.E.	NUMBER	NUMBER REVISION & TEST
9.00 9.45	NUMBER	NUMBER	GEOGRAPHY	NUMBER	NUMBER REVISION & TEST
9.45 10.00	B	R	E	A	K
10.00 10.30	LIBRARY	MUSIC	NUMBER	LIBRARY	SPELLING REVISION & TEST
10.30 11.00	BOOK REPORT	GRAMMAR	NUMBER	GRAMMAR	SPELLING REVISION & TEST
11.00 11.15	B	R	E	A	K
11.15 11.45	ENGLISH COMPREHEN- SION	SPELLING & WRITING PRACTICE	HEALTH & NUTRITION	HISTORY (ORAL WORK)	PENCIL DRAWING
11.45 12.15	ENGLISH COMPRE- HENSION	NOVEL	WRITTEN NOVEL WORK	NOVEL	DRAMA
12.15 1.00	B	R	E      A	K	XXXXX
1.00 2.00	ART & CRAFT	HISTORY (WRITTEN WORK)	ENGLISH COMPRE- HENSION	CREATIV E ENGLISH (ESSAY)	XXXXXX



APPENDIX V  
 INFORMATION ON THE REVIEW OF THE COMMON  
 ENTRANCE EXAMINATION

Primary School Heads

Q: H 11d (1)

Data

Response	Total No. (N = 15)	Urban (N = 8)	Rural (N = 7)
Use of primary school subjects	12	7	5
Use of continuous assessment grades	3	1	2

Response	Total No. (N = 18)	Urban (N = 10)	Rural (N = 8)
Use of primary school subjects	14	8	6
Use of continuous assessment grades	4	2	2

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